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# WANDERINGS OF A VAGABOND.

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

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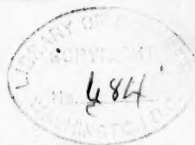
JOHN MORRIS, *author.*

*John O'Connor.*

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"And we will put down the things we have seen as seen, and the things we have heard as heard, in order that our book may be honest and true, without any lie, and that every one that may read or hear this book may believe it; for all things it contains are true."—*Recueil des Voyages de la Société de Géographie.—Voyage de Marco Polo.*

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NEW YORK:

PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR.



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## INTRODUCTORY.

"The castled crag of Drachenfels  
Frowns o'er the wide and winding Rhine."

In all Europe no lovelier view meets the eye of the tourist than that seen from the summit of the Dragon Mountain. For more than sixty miles the eye may trace the windings of the beautiful Rhine, as it meanders through fertile valleys adorned with highly-cultivated farms, vineyards, churches, villas, and the palatial residences of the nobility. Beneath him lies the beautiful village of Melheim, to the left the ruins of Rollandseck and the islands of Nonnerswerth and Oberwinter, to the right the ruins of Godesburg, and, farther on, the city of Bonn, while in the dim distance the cathedral spires of Cologne point to heaven.

As the eye turns from the river the scene is entirely changed. Hills elevated above hills, in endless succession of pyramids, until the eye turns for relief to the beautiful Rhine.

The Rhine! The German's fairy-land! His heaven upon earth! The semi-barbarous hordes who, centuries ago, inhabited the castles whose picturesque ruins strike the traveler with admiration and delight, are to him familiar friends. Their deeds of rapine, their deadly feuds, the scenes of "battle, murder, and sudden death," in which their lives were spent, are to him the essence of chivalry. Truly, a more blood-thirsty set of villains never disgraced humanity. The peasantry who fed their flocks on the fertile hills, or lived in Arcadian simplicity in the valleys enclosed by them, had no rights which they held themselves bound to respect. "Might made right," according to their creed, and their scanty flocks were laid under contribution at their pleasure, and even their wives and daughters torn from their arms to gratify the brutal lust of their masters. Such were the

Rhenish heroes, whose deeds are the theme of poets, historians, and writers of romance, and whose magnificent tombs, emblazoned with their virtues, adorn many of the temples along the banks of the Rhine, while the ruins of their feudal palaces still dot the banks of that beautiful stream, monuments of rapine and oppression.

From Bonn to Manheim the scenery is at times wild and startling, then as serenely beautiful as one of Claude Lorraine's evening scenes.

But the hand of man has done as much to beautify the scenery along the Rhine as the hand of nature. Improved architecture has given to the dwellers on the banks of this storied river, more commodious and modern, if less picturesque dwellings, than those formerly occupied by their robber chieftains, and the wayfarer is now sheltered in elegantly-appointed hotels, instead of being the guest of lordly barons, and is plundered after the most approved modern fashion. No impolite demand for "your money or your life," accompanied with an argument in the shape of a sword, lance, or battle-axe. Matters are arranged in a much more polished style in these civilized days. Mine host presents his bill with the courtly bow of the Mexican robber while inviting a padre on the road to disgorge. He is careful to wait until the luggage of his guest is on the cart, and the carriage waits to convey him to the steamer or railway station. He then presents his bill of costs. 'Tis of no use to haggle over the items; as soon would the robber chieftains of old abate one jot or tittle of their demand, as the smiling host who so suavely insists on his "bond," even to the uttermost farthing.

No grander treat can be given to the denizens of the overcrowded cities of London, Paris, or St. Petersburg, than a trip through the mountains of Switzerland and along the Rhine. The scenery of France, England, and Russia, is tame in comparison, and they are ravished with delight on first beholding this storied river. Have not Byron, Scott, and many others, immortalized its scenic beauties, both in song and prose?

But the Irishman can find as pleasing scenery along his own beautiful Shannon, and Switzerland nor Italy has nothing to compare with the charming Lakes of Killarney. Even the Scot need not desert his native mountains for those of other countries, and the American, who crosses the most dangerous ocean

in the world to behold the beauties and wonders of another continent, leaves behind him scenes as grand and beautiful along the upper Mississippi, the St. Lawrence, and the great lakes. He will not find his native Hudson surpassed, even by the Rhine, nor lakes in Europe more charming than Saint George.

The dwellers on the western range of the Andes can well afford to look with indifference on the scenery of Switzerland, and a short sea voyage of three days, from New Orleans to Vera Cruz, and a forty miles journey, over one of the finest roads in the world, to the city of Jalapa, and the traveler finds himself surrounded by scenery unsurpassed on the face of the earth for grandeur and sublimity, and where all the climates and productions of the world can be embraced in a single glance from the mountain-side above Jalapa.

The seeker after antiquities may continue his journey to Yucatan, where once flourished a now extinct and almost totally unknown race of beings, believed to have been as highly civilized as the people of Assyria and Ancient Egypt, and the ruins of whose once splendid temples and cities he will find, amongst the tropical forests of Misantra and Papantla, and which will prove as interesting to him as climbing the pyramids of Egypt or rambling among the musty tombs of Memphis or of Thebes.

It is now, however, only fashionable for Americans to make the "tower of Oorop," and up the Nile to the Holy Land, and to return thoroughly disgusted with—everything American.

La Belle Riviere, or the Ohio, was once a favorite resort during the summer months. It is, indeed, a beautiful stream! The lovely valleys and rounded hills, into which its banks are diversified, present to the eye a succession of verdure so varied as to at once attract the lover of beautiful scenery. For more than six hundred miles the eye is momentarily presented with something new to feed upon. It has not, indeed, the ruined castles and churches, the terraced vineyards and frowning cliffs, for which the romantic Rhine is celebrated, but, at every turn of the river, finely-cultivated farms, thriving orchards, herds of cattle, sheep, and horses, "on a thousand hills," with an endless number of towns, cities, and villages, teeming with a restless and energetic people.

Twenty years ago the charming scenery of the Ohio was the theme of painters and tourists who moved over its gentle waters,

and enjoyed its ever-changing scenery from the decks of palatial steamers which supplied to the traveler every luxury of a first-class hotel.

But railroads have superseded this once delightful route, and the beauties of this most lovely river are left to an occasional wandering tourist, the dweller on its banks, or the boatman who labors along its tranquil waters.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### EARLY DAYS.

In one of the loveliest of those valleys which lie along the Ohio River, the author of these memoirs had the fortune, or the misfortune, to become one of the human family.

I leave the question an open one, because there has been much haggling over the query, whether the birth of a human being is a fortunate event, or otherwise, to him or her having no control or choice in their own incarnation, and who, if what the orthodox affirm be true, may be "foreordained from the beginning of the world" to suffer not only here, but eternal torments hereafter, for the "deeds done in the body."

There is, has been, and always will be in existence, many who believe birth to be a misfortune; for who would desire to come upon this earth to endure "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, and the thousand natural ills the flesh is heir to," only to leave it for that rather uncertain locality where "the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched"? This abstruse question is too deep for me, and I leave to hair-splitting philosophers and wrangling priests a subject on which they have wasted much argument, without arriving at any satisfactory result. Of this (to me) important fact, I am perfectly satisfied—that I *was* born into the world, in the town of Marietta; whether for fortune or misfortune. It was doubtless ordained that I should be born there, and probably also ordained that I should be a wanderer and a vagabond on the face of the earth, and finally give these memoirs to the public, in which I have related my experience.

I regret not the past and anticipate not the future, and look on life, with its pleasures, vexations, and cares, as a feverish dream.



If I am sorry for anything, it is that the theme on which I write is not in more able hands. But the subject is within the knowledge of but few; and of those few persons, I do not know of one any more capable of writing a book upon the subject than myself. Therefore, whatever may be its defects, let them be attributed rather to the lack of education than lack of truth.

Forty years ago the town of Marietta was a thriving place, depending mostly on the rich farming country by which it was surrounded, and numbered a population of fifteen hundred souls. It contained two flour mills, a foundry, and, as it was the county seat, a brick court-house and jail.

A fine little wharf, paved in with cobble-stones, adorned the city front, and afforded accommodation to the steamboats, trading-boats, keel-boats, and all the various river-craft that plied on the waters of the placid Ohio.

The little town could boast also of four different religious sects, for the godly lived in Marietta.

The Methodists and Presbyterians had each a small brick church; while the Catholics and Baptists had each a less pretentious temple, to wit, a small frame building.

As far as my recollection goes, the four religious denominations, or at least their members, jogged on pretty peaceably together, bearing the usual amount of backbiting, "hate, envy, and all uncharitableness," to be found generally among Christian sects, and all other sects, I suppose, who imagine their way the only right one; and their road to heaven the only legitimate one.

In our town the Methodists and Presbyterians were the ruling powers, much inclined to Puritanism in their notions, and with a disposition to rule sinners by whip and spur.

None but the godly could hold any office in Marietta.

Groggeries, bowling saloons, billiard tables, and other abominations of "the world, the flesh and the devil," were not tolerated, and the individual who desired to slake his thirst in a draught of "red eye," or any other alcoholic fluid, was obliged to call at the bar of the "Old Hickory Tavern."

This venerable structure was a two-story house, built of logs, with a curfew cupola on the top, from whence the alarm was sounded, which told the patrons of the "Old Hickory" when their meals were ready.

As was customary in those days, a tall sign-post stood in

front of this hostel, from which dangled a large square sign, ornamented with a portrait of the terrible hero of New Orleans, dressed in what was then supposed to be full military style, seated on a cavorting steed, with a drawn sword in his hand, his gray hair standing out beneath his cocked hat, like "quills on the fretful porcupine," while, from the expression of his countenance, one would imagine him in the act of dealing death, destruction, and damnation, to the entire host of Britishers.

Such was the "Old Hickory" tavern, the only institution of its kind in the place. It was, to the lovers of that "triumph of the adversary," whiskey, what the oasis in the desert is to the parched traveler; even the boatmen who desired to quench their thirst had no other resort, so opposed were the puritanical rulers of the town to drinking-houses. Had they possessed the power, even the bar of the "Old Hickory" would not have been permitted to dispense whiskey and its evil influence to the inhabitants of the place. But the laws of the State allowed taverns to sell liquors for the accommodation of their guests, and John Travis, the jolly landlord, was a grievous thorn in the flesh to many of the godly town, who offered up long-winded prayers and exhortations in his behalf. But the incorrigible sinner refused to repent, and exchange whiskey-dispensing for psalm-singing, and was finally given up as irrevocably damned. He took the matter very easy, however, for one in his perilous situation, and even seemed to prosper under it. Perhaps the knowledge that much good company was in the same boat with him, reconciled him to his fate; for in even so holy a place as Marietta, were many jolly fellows, fond of sport and their glass of whiskey, and who managed to enjoy a tolerably jolly life, notwithstanding the frowns and predictions of their more godly townsmen, who considered every one irremediably lost, who, under any circumstances whatever, visited a horse-race, cock-fight, bull-bait, the bar-room of the Old Hickory, or so much as handled a pack of cards.

For a place so far west, and so much frequented by boatmen, Marietta had more than her share of puritanical tyranny. But, in those days, this sort of oppression had spread its influence from the eastern shores of New England to the confines of western civilization, and made itself heavily felt in nearly all the Southern States.

The Puritans wielded the law-making power of the country,

and could they but have effectually carried out their designs, we should now be borne back to the good old days of Cotton Mather.

For many years they held this power, but the unruly spirits of the land, more especially in our large cities and many of the important towns in the Southern and Western States, revolted against their arbitrary and despotic acts, and prevented them from being enforced.

But if Puritanism received a check in that direction, it still held unlimited sway over what is called "society."

"Society" shut its doors in the faces of those who dared dispute its somber teachings, or enjoy life contrary to its rigid and uncompromising rules.

Exceptions were of course made in favor of the unmarried sons of the wealthy. Their infidelities could be tolerated until suitable wives could be provided for them from among the faithful, and they could thereby be brought into the godly fold.

Money has the same powerful influence over the opinions of the rigid moralist that it holds over those of the most hardened and villainous.

That salutary laws are necessary to check the growth of immorality, protect the interests of the people, and curb vice within bounds, is unquestionable; but whenever such power has been placed in the hands of Puritanism, it has been used for sectarian aggrandisement, and eventually has degenerated into intolerance and oppression.

However despotic and brutal may have been the means used by Peter the great, to bring his subjects into a more advanced state of civilization, he was certainly the greatest practical reformer of those mentioned in history.

He partially succeeded in reforming the morals of his people, in the face of the most hostile opposition of an intolerant and bigoted clergy; but not before he had curbed the power and reformed the morals of the clergy themselves.

That the morals and social condition of the people of these United States have undergone a remarkable change, within the last thirty years, no one will dispute. Rampant rowdiness and drunkenness is not nearly so prevalent as at that period.

In my boyhood, a fourth of July, St. Patrick's day, a general muster, or even a camp-meeting, that passed without the average amount of fighting having taken place, was a thing unheard of.

Each city, town, and village had its bullies, who were esteemed, among a certain class of their townsmen, in proportion to their prowess in "free fights."

Whenever these worthies met, at any public gathering, a fight of some sort was the inevitable consequence. If one could not, as was preferable, be arranged with the champions of some rival town, their "dernier resort" was a "set-to" among themselves, just to keep their hands in.

In those days, fighting was popular with the masses, and the contests of their gladiators were to them as interesting and exciting as were those which took place in the arena of ancient Rome to its people.

Between these partisan bullies, that which begun in single combat was frequently joined by the friends of both parties, numbering sometimes fifty or more, and a free fight was the result, and a fortunate thing was it if it ended in nothing more serious than black eyes, bloody noses, and cracked skulls.

Of organized police there was none worthy the name, even in our large cities; and if a constable, sheriff, or any other officer presumed to interpose his authority to preserve the peace, or break up a fight, his interference was considered highly impertinent, and as an infringement of his rights of amusement which no son of liberty would for a moment tolerate.

Nor was this roughness of character confined entirely to the lower classes; even the wealthy, and, I am sorry to add, educated portion of the people, did not consider it beneath them to be the aiders and abettors of rowdyism.

Even our first-class colleges were but little less than schools of rowdyism.

The amusements of the scions of the aristocracy consisted in playing exceedingly personal practical jokes, wrenching off knockers and bell-handles, knocking down infirm watchmen, and a constant succession of fights with the young men of the town or those of rival colleges, which not unfrequently resulted in death to some, and disfigurement for life to many more.

Among the wealthy and cultured classes punctiliousness was mistaken for politeness, and their haughty and patronizing manner towards their poorer and more ignorant neighbors was nearly unbearable, and must, in time, have led to a bloody social revolution, had it not been for our extensive territory, and the

immense tide of European emigration constantly flowing in upon us.

How often have we smarted beneath the lash of criticism, so unsparingly inflicted upon us by Dickens, Capt. Hale, and Mrs. Trollope. The writers of this country have exhausted their genius in abusing them, because they had the audacity to hold up to the world's ridicule the elegant peculiarities of the inhabitants of the "greatest country on the face of the earth." But these criticisms have unquestionably done much for our improvement; and though in many respects highly colored, have certainly had the effect of polishing down many of the rough points in our character.

It is now nearly forty years since Mrs. Trollope published her book—and what a sensation it created! It aroused the indignation of the reading public from the great Lakes to the Gulf. Yet nearly every statement made in that book was truthful! When she said, in her book of travels, that it was common on our western river steamers to see men seated at their meals, in company with ladies, in their shirt-sleeves, she told only the simple truth; and only what I myself have witnessed repeatedly, and, I doubt not, many who read this have also witnessed.

When she declared she had seen in the dress circle of our first-class theatres, men seated on the balustrade in their shirt-sleeves, with their backs to the audience, while dozens of feet at the same time rested on the rail, she told but the truth! Yet hundreds of pens and thousands of tongues branded her with falsehood.

Before her work appeared, it was no uncommon thing for both officers and passengers to be seen at table, on board the western steamers, in their shirt-sleeves. I saw the same thing myself a few years after reading her work.

Whether the lady's book caused the revolution or not, I am unable to say; but within a year or two after its publication, no person was permitted to seat himself at table, on a steamer carrying passengers, unless in proper costume.

For myself, I have no recollection of ever seeing a person seated on the balustrade of the dress-circle of a theatre in his shirt-sleeves, with his back to the stage while the performance was going on, but I have been credibly informed, by eye-witnesses, that the thing has been repeatedly witnessed by them;

and I have myself seen such a want of decorum between acts, on several occasions, as no description could do justice to. I have also seen, though I am glad to say not often, persons asleep in the dress-circle, with their legs hanging over the balustrade, and it was no uncommon sight, a few years since, in our southern and western theatres, to see, between the acts, an extensive crop of boots reposing on it.

Such want of decorum was never permitted in the Mobile and New Orleans theatres, but these were the only ones west of the Alleghanies and south of the Potomac River, in which good manners were not permitted to be infringed.

I doubt if there is now, within the broad compass of Uncle Sam's dominion, a theatre where a person would be permitted to show disrespect to the audience by hanging his legs over the balustrade, sitting upon it, or by elevating his boots upon it.

This reformation commenced in the pit, as that portion of the theatre now occupied by orchestra chairs was formerly denominated.

Whoever first started the cry of "Boots," in the pit of a theatre, was the first reformer. The cry became popular; whenever a foot appeared, the cry of "Boots" was started, taken up by the whole pit, and never ceased until the obnoxious foot had disappeared.

In the course of my wandering life, I have witnessed two affairs in theatres, which, in the way of disgraceful conduct, certainly far surpassed anything described in Mrs. Trollope's book.

The first of these took place in the Jefferson Street Theatre, in Louisville, in the summer of 1837. One of the bloods of the place, having partaken too freely of the ardent, took the liberty to sleep it off in the dress-circle, and also to find a resting-place for his feet by hanging them over the balustrade.

His indecorous position might have passed unchallenged by the pit of a Louisville theatre, which, at that period, had not accustomed itself to be at all squeamish about an unusual display of legs, but the fellow snored so loudly as to attract the attention of the entire house. The rowdy pit was the first to take exceptions to the gentleman's rather free-and-easy way of taking his nap. They commenced to call the attention of the rest of the audience by yells, cat-calls, hoots, and cries of "put 'em out," "saw his legs off," "pitch 'em down," "grease his nos-

trills, etc. The noise and confusion awoke the slumbering gentleman, who stared around him for several seconds, and finally began to comprehend that he was the cause of the disturbance. He flew into a violent rage, and appeared to be seized with a desire to thrash the whole house. He hurled at his tormentors a volley of fierce oaths, which only caused them to hoot, hiss, and yell the louder. At this instant his eye fell on a knot of persons immediately beneath him, who, with arms outstretched towards him, were hooting, yelling and gesticulating like so many fiends. His rage was now centered on this group. Without a moment's hesitation he swung himself over the balustrade, landing among his tormentors, and rained stunning blows from his fist, right and left, wherever he saw a head to strike at. His attacks were so sudden and unexpected that he had felled three of his tormentors, and made as many more feel the weight of his fist, before they recovered from their surprise. They soon rallied, however, and after a short and bloody struggle, the attacking party was beaten down, trodden under foot, and thumped nearly out of all semblance to humanity, with scarcely a stitch of clothing remaining on his person. After which short but glorious struggle he was carried out, covered with blood, while the sympathy of the audience, who were in a state of the wildest excitement at this short act not mentioned on the bills, showed itself unmistakably in favor of the cause of the disturbance.

The women seemed quite as much interested as the men, and the actors on the stage never changed their places, but patiently waited until the row was over, when the play was resumed.

Five years later I was present at a performance in Shire's Theatre at Cincinnati.

Between the acts, a gentleman (?) seated himself on the balustrade, with his legs dangling over the outside; while in this position he amused himself by squirting tobacco juice on to the heads of the spectators beneath him in the pit—a piece of pleasantries which cost him dearly.

One of his victims, on discovering the outrage, quietly left the theatre, and returned with two paving-stones, one of which, being hurled at his head, at his next compliment in the tobacco-juice line, brought him tumbling into the pit like a felled ox.

His assailant then explained his reason for such conduct, and

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his explanation being borne out by the soiled garments of several around him, twenty feet at least commenced kicking the fellow, who had not yet recovered from the blow from the paving-stone, and it is probable he would have been killed then and there, had not a body of police forced their way to the spot and rescued him, in an insensible state, covered with blood, and beaten nearly to a jelly.

Happily, such want of decorum, and such barbarous scenes as I have described, are no longer to be seen at our places of amusement. I have heard of but a single fight at any of our race meetings for fifteen years. That to which I allude took place on the Metairie course, at New Orleans, during the ascendancy of the Thugs.

Our "glorious fourth," and St. Patrick's day, pass off quietly. The bands of firemen, who formerly disgraced our large cities with their frequent brawls and fights, have disappeared, and the timid and peaceable will no more be disturbed by their lawless conduct. Our numerous elections pass off quietly, and even the "Boyne water" creates but little excitement among our Celtic citizens outside the city of New York.

New York, once considered the worst-governed city in the United States, and as entirely given over to rowdiness, has, within the last few years, carried her elections peaceably in comparison with former times. During the presidential election of 1864, not a single fight took place, nor was there a drunken man to be seen in the streets; but this surprising state of things in the annals of New York was doubtless due in a great measure to the presence in the city of Gen. Butler with a large body of troops—a fact which, no doubt, produced on many a very moral effect. It is true, our police force is now larger and better organized than formerly, but if the people had not learned to appreciate good order, the police would be powerless. Formerly, the people enjoyed a fight, and, so far from assisting any lawful authority to prevent or break up a disturbance, would actually hinder them in the discharge of their duty. Places of amusement and drinking saloons have increased with the increase in our population, yet there is less drunkenness at the present time than forty years ago, and rowdiness is also happily on the decline. This change for the better has not been wrought by religious sects, or the teachings of any of their creeds. It is



due to a better acquaintance with the world. The press, telegraphs, railroads, and public schools, have been our great reformers. The large amount of emigration from other countries has made us acquainted with a new race of beings. Many of their customs we have adopted, their more gentle manners have had a tendency to soften many of the rougher traits in our characters. If we still stick to the "red eye" whiskey, it is not now, as formerly, the prevalent drink. From the emigrants we have learned the use of malt liquors and light wines, and consequently there is not the same amount of drunkenness in the country, with a population of nearly forty millions, as when we numbered scarcely one-third as many.

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## CHAPTER II.

### EARLY DAYS.

Facing the court-house, and within a few doors of the "Old Hickory" tavern, stood a one-story frame building, with a goodly roof.

The front of this building was painted white, and a bright yellow door, on each side of which was a window with green Venetian blinds, afforded the only means of egress and ingress; and the flaming gilt letters on the sign-board over the door informed the public that this was the establishment of "Giles & Morris, Merchant Tailors."

The inside of this institution, which was about twenty feet in width, and something more than double that number in depth, was divided by a partition into two apartments. The first of these, which was the business part of the establishment, had a planed floor, a plastered ceiling, and handsomely papered walls, which were ornamented with penny pictures of hunting and fishing scenes, racing and trotting horses, etc.

Near the partition, which divided the "store" from the working department, stood a long pine table or counter, on which was arranged several bolts of foreign and domestic cloth, and on the three shelves supported against the partition were various descriptions of goods belonging to the tailoring business. The furniture consisted of half a dozen cane-seat chairs, a ragged

sofa, and a large mirror, in which the customers of Giles & Morris were wont to inspect their newly-made clothing. A door in the aforementioned partition gave entrance to the work department, which had also another entrance in the rear of the building.

As far as appearances were concerned, this room had not the remotest claim to respectability. The flooring and walls were composed of unplanned boards, and the rough beams, on which rested the flooring of the upper story, were uncovered. It was furnished with a tailoring table of a size to accommodate about three workmen, a few pine benches, several splint-bottomed chairs, a water-pail, a wash-basin, and a large metal stove.

In a corner of the room was a rough staircase, which led to the regions above, where worn-out articles of various descriptions were stored, to be out of the way. One corner of this lumber-room was reserved, however, as a kind of arsenal, for storing shot-guns, rifles, game-bags, nets, fishing tackle, etc., etc.

Giles and Morris were both married, but I was the sole offspring of that illustrious firm. My father, John Morris, and his partner, had conducted the only respectable tailoring business in the place, since the year 1825, at which time they emigrated there, from Pittsburg, which city was the native place of both.

The business yielded them a very respectable living, and, had they been at all provident, they might have easily laid by something for a rainy day. But the firm of Giles & Morris never looked ahead to meet trouble, but were firm believers in an old Irish adage, which affirms that "It's time enough to bid the devil good morning when you meet him." They loved life for the enjoyment which it afforded them. Both were mighty hunters, and the life of the sporting fraternity in Marietta. They were organizers and directors of all hunting and fishing excursions, the umpires at quarter-races, cock-fights, dog-fights, bull-baits, bear-baits, etc. The two latter amusements, now almost unknown, were in those days very popular. Both habitually dressed in the style of hunters, and never moved without a retinue of pointers, setters and spaniels, at their heels; while at their residences they never failed to have chained one or two fierce bull-dogs, which they were always ready to match in a fight against any other animals of the canine species, for sums varying from twenty-five to one hundred dollars.

They had also a fine breed of game-cocks, distributed on different farms in the vicinity, with which they were not averse to

fight a main with any cockers who disputed the invincible prowess of the birds of the firm of Morris & Giles.

I suppose there never before or since existed a firm where perfect good feeling and tranquillity reigned so supremely as with my father and his associate. Whatever was done by one partner was cordially endorsed by the other. Any business contract entered into by one partner received the full concurrence of the other. And if one committed any little indiscretion, such as going on a spree and spending or gambling away the money belonging to the firm, the amount so appropriated was set down as "expenses," and not the slightest misunderstanding or bickering took place. "A bully firm" was the verdict of the sports of the town. I think no husbands were kinder or more attentive to their wives, no ladies in Marietta dressed better than my mother and the wife of my father's partner, and I believe they were loving and faithful wives. My parents lived very happily together, according to my best recollections, during the short time they were permitted to remain on this earth with me. To me they were affectionate and indulgent, more especially my mother, who was a person of some literary attainments, and spent her leisure hours reading books of travel, novels, poetry, etc. As for my father, the only book of any sort he was ever known to open was his ledger.

In the summer of 1832 the town was visited by that fell scourge whose poisonous sting has defied the researches of medical science--the Asiatic cholera. Among its victims were both my parents; struck down within an hour of each other. Amid this rapid havoc of death I was left alone, too young to understand the loss I had suffered, or that I was the last of my race. If my parents left any relatives behind them, they have never come within the scope of my knowledge.

Death therefore dissolved the firm of "Giles & Morris;" but the business was continued by the remaining partner, and the large sign-board over the door remained unchanged. Mr. Giles had many advantageous offers of partnership, all of which he refused, affirming that a copartnership existed between him and myself, for I had fallen under his guardianship, together with the property my parents had left, which consisted of the house where we had lived, its furniture, and a half interest in the tailor's shop, and the ground on which it stood.

## CHAPTER III.

## PROFESSION.

Shortly after the death of my parents, I was consigned to the care of an old Irishman, Peter McBirney by name, who had been chosen by the godly Presbyterians to preside over the Academy of Marietta, and to enlighten the understanding, correct the tempers, and form the manners of the youth of the place. During the five years which I passed under the fostering care of the venerable McBirney, he managed to flog some of the rudiments of reading, writing, and ciphering, into my cranium. He was a severe master, and used the rod upon his scholars with an unsparing hand, and what little education I received from him cost me many tears and stripes. When I could read, write, and cast up accounts tolerably, Mr. Giles considered my education finished, and removed me from the care of this worthy old gentleman, and transferred me to the tailoring board, where it was intended I should learn the trade of my father; but it requires two to make a bargain, and my worthy foster-father and myself were by no means in accord on the subject. The business was hateful to me. A tailor! My ambitious soul soared far above such a commonplace occupation. In fact, I had no desire to learn any trade, but had a romantic idea of being a rover and of seeing the world—a desire which was strengthened by reading novels, and books of travels, of which I was inordinately fond. My fond foster-parents saw with grief my intractable disposition, for their minds were set on my occupying the vacant place of my father in the respectable firm of "Giles & Morris;" but "the best laid schemes of mice and men gang aft a-glee," and they were doomed to disappointment. Often did my poor foster-mother, with tears in her eyes, prophesy that I should leave this world in the presence of a large audience some fine day, my exit being facilitated by "Jack Ketch," and that all the cares they had lavished on me would be repaid by my bringing their gray hairs in sorrow and shame to the grave. But, I am happy to say, none of these somber predictions have been verified. So far, I have escaped with my life, and never, I believe, either brought shame or sorrow to the hearthstone of

my kind benefactors (contrary, I doubt not, to their expectations), or allowed want to visit their door in their old age. And when a kind Providence relieved them from the burdens of this life, I caused a neat head-stone to be placed at the grave of each, on which were recorded their names, ages, and many virtues.

Had I been less obstinate in refusing to comply with the wishes of my foster-parents, I might have been to-day a respectable member of society, one of the ruling lights of Marietta, perhaps—possibly its Mayor, or even Governor of Ohio! Who knows? Perhaps I might be rich in gold; the owner of wide domains; the father of numerous sons and daughters, surrounded by hosts of friends, sincere, no doubt, so long as their interests led them to be so.

While wealth is yours, and fortune smiles, friends will throng around, and, like vultures, batten upon you; but let the fickle jade desert you, and the cold shade of adversity fall upon you, and they will leave you as quickly as rats will abandon a sinking ship. Friendship is a holy name, but how shamefully abused by man! Friendship, separated from interest, is almost as difficult to discover as the rejuvenating springs in the everglades of Florida, which so long haunted the dreams of the knightly cut-throats of Spain. No friendship can exist between the wicked, the voluptuous, men of business, or politicians. The first have only accomplices, the second companions, the third partners, the fourth designing associates. It is only among the truly virtuous that friendship can exist. As I was a disobedient and wayward boy, and have led a thriftless and roving life, I am possessed of neither honors, wealth, nor friends. Destiny decreed it; everything is governed by its immutable laws.

Jupiter, supreme over gods and men, was ignorant that at the birth of Thetis, the fates had decreed that her offspring should be greater than his father, and had it not been for the dark hints thrown out by the Titan, whom he had chained to a rock, as a punishment for stealing fire from heaven, for the benefit of mankind, would have made her Queen of Heaven. The Titan exchanged his secret for his liberty, and Juno was made Queen of Heaven instead of the mother of Achilles.

If I did not learn the tailoring business under the worthy Giles, I in a great measure transacted his business for him, keeping his books, making out and collecting his bills, and otherwise rendering myself useful to him.

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For many years, old Seruggs, a bottle-nosed blue Presbyterian, and one of the "unco guild," was prosecuting attorney for the town of Marietta, notwithstanding the efforts of the "jolly boys" at every election, to oust him from his office. The old cock knew his strength, however, and also knew his foes. And whenever one of the boys found himself in the strong grip of the law, he looked for no mercy at the hands of Seruggs, and certainly found none. From the moment he was installed in his office, he allowed no opportunity to slip of showing his hostility to the firm of "Giles & Morris," whose place was considered by the "unco guild" of Marietta to be the head-quarters of all the reprobates for miles around, and a hot-bed of devilry in general. The mysterious gatherings which took place nightly in that building could be for no good purpose. Had not young Morton, a well-to-do dealer in the grocery line, been ruined there, and been obliged to fly from the town from inability to meet the demands of his creditors? Did not poor Jenkins, chief clerk in the mercantile firm of "Clarke & Fisher," embezzle the money of his employers, and gamble it away at the tailor-shop of Giles & Morris, and, in consequence, had also fled to parts unknown? Was it not publicly known that John Travis, the landlord of the "Old Hickory," had for years been decoying his guests to that infamous place, that they might be robbed of their money at cards? Was it not common talk, not only in Marietta, but for miles around, that the establishment was nothing more nor less than a gambling-hell? Notwithstanding this, and the active means of Seruggs and his associates, who stuck at no underhanded measures to accomplish their ends, the nightly visitors of the firm of "Giles & Morris" managed to escape the punishment which their enemies were burning to inflict upon them. During the life of my father, the sheriff, with a posse of citizens, had once burst open the door at the back of the tailor-shop, in the expectation of arresting a party of gamblers while engaged at their nefarious business. But they only discovered several gentlemen in conversation over whiskey and cigars in the working department, and, to their great chagrin and confusion, saw no signs of cards, nor any indication whatever that the inmates had met for the purpose of gambling. This occurrence created no small stir in the little town. Many of the citizens who abhorred gambling as much as theft were not at all

prepared to sanction the forcible entry into a house by the officers of the law, unless armed with authority by a magistrate. Such a precedent was a dangerous one, and contained a menace against the rights of domestic privacy, which many of the religious and respectable citizens were not disposed to tolerate.

But Puritanism held its potent sway over the officers and the courts, and scarcely a lawyer could be found in the place, who possessed sufficient courage to take a stand against its tyranny. I forgot to say that after the sheriff and his party had perpetrated the outrage mentioned, they retired without making any arrests, or the smallest excuse for their unwarrantable conduct. The firm of Giles & Morris, when the district court next sat, brought before that honorable body the outrage it had suffered, and appealed to it for protection against similar violent visits in the future, but the appeal was treated with indifference, if not with contempt.

The result of this descent of the sheriff and his followers, and the refusal of the court to take any action on this outrage, was the formation of a new political party in the town, being the first blow ever struck there against the absolute sway of Puritanism. The firm of Giles & Morris were the head and front of this new faction, and around them rallied all the free-livers and free-thinkers in the vicinity. From the rivermen and longshoremen residing in the place it gained its greatest support. The opposition, like all parties, had its platform; and among the many planks in it was one advocating the introduction into the place of gin-shops, bowling-alleys, billiard-saloons and other like places of amusement. In its infancy the new party seemed but a speck on the horizon; but it gained strength year by year, until it became so powerful as to be a serious thorn in the flesh to the faction in power, which had been watching its growth with no little uneasiness. The second year after the death of my parents, the Puritans and the opposition contested the bitterest election ever held in Marietta—the former, as usual, being victorious. The feelings of both parties were aroused to a war footing, though, happily, the affair passed without blood having been spilled. Mr. Scruggs and his followers now became satisfied that nothing short of the total extinction of the firm of Giles & Morris would sustain them in power. Accordingly, one night, when no moon or stars mitigated in the slightest degree the Cimmerian

darkness, and scarcely a twinkling light was to be seen in the quiet little town, the sheriff and about twenty men, citizens of the place, met by preconcerted arrangement at his house, and proceeded with noiseless steps towards the building occupied by the obnoxious parties, where it was supposed gambling took place. Mr. Scruggs accompanied the expedition, in order to give to its acts the sanction of lawful authority. The party halted silently at the door at the rear of the establishment, which was ordered by the sheriff to be opened. Not receiving any response to his summons, he burst the door open, with the assistance of his companions; when, however, they attempted to enter, they were confronted with the muzzles of seven or eight double-barreled guns, which had such an effect on them, that their courage, like Bob Acre's, "oozed out at their finger-ends," and from which they turned and fled incontinently.

When it became known, on the following day, that the sheriff had been resisted in the discharge of his duty, a terrible excitement stirred the town to its depths; such outlawry was unknown there, and an indignation meeting was called, which was presided over by the Presbyterian minister, and in which Scruggs and his colleagues, in stirring speeches, advocated the entire annihilation of the firm of Giles & Morris, and everything pertaining thereto. His proposal was carried by acclamation, and before time had been allowed for matters to cool, a motley throng of more than two hundred people were moving towards the premises occupied by the parties concerned, with the determination to wipe it from the face of the earth. But their benevolent purpose was frustrated; for, when they reached the place, they found over forty determined men, armed with rifles, ready to protect it at any cost. This unexpected sight cooled their ardor, and after some muttering and threats, they abandoned their hostile intentions and dispersed. Scruggs, finding himself defeated in his attempts to break the law, fell back upon it to consummate his revenge. Giles and as many as twenty of his associates were indicted for sedition, and nearly every other crime in the statutes of the State. But the determined resistance of those parties, to the attacks on them, convinced the Puritans that it was no use to push matters, unless they were prepared to fight. The court was willing to set aside the indictments brought against Giles and his friends, and to entertain the opinion that they had some rights in the



community, even if it were suspected they were in the habit of breaking the laws by participating in gambling. After all, courts of justice are composed of only human intelligences, who dispense justice according to public opinion, instead of the spirit of the law. When, a few years before, Giles accused the sheriff before the court with having forcibly entered his premises in direct violation of the law, the court would not listen to him, because he had no power in the community. When he became powerful enough to resist the encroachments of the authorities, the eye of the court was open to conviction; it decided that the sheriff had overstepped his authority when he attempted to break into the house of a private citizen, without a warrant from a magistrate, for the purpose of arresting suspected gambling parties. This decision freed the firm of Giles & Morris from the forcible visitations of the officers of the law, but not from espionage. Scruggs was ever on the alert to obtain evidence against the nightly frequenters of the place, but his attempts were generally frustrated. The grand jury sat but once in six months. Before the assembling of that august body, Giles and his friends, or at least those of them who had any fear of being summoned, would generally contrive to be absent on a fishing or hunting excursion, and not return until the danger was past. Since the opposition party had developed its strength, some of its members were on the jury at each session; and if the tales were true, which Giles and a few of his intimate friends used to chuckle over, they had timely warning whenever a grand jury was disposed to be troublesome. There were men on those juries, who held the strange idea that one's first duty was to protect one's friends, and, when that hung in the balance, were not half as particular about the secrets which hang around the august proceedings of grand juries, as was Hamlet's father about those of his "prison-house."

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE CLUB.

The club, which assembled nearly every night at the tailor's shop, numbered about fifteen, and was composed of lawyers, doctors, merchants, farmers and mechanics. Mr. Giles was its presiding officer, and no person could gain admittance without the concurrence of the President, and at least six of its members. No spies or garrulous persons had a ghost of a chance of entering the doors while any kind of gambling was going on. The gambling was usually confined to the working department; when this became so crowded as to admit no more tables, the store was used. The two, three or four journeymen constantly employed by Mr. Giles, and who were also members, during the day worked in the back room, and if a press of business protracted their services into the evening, occupied the store.

The different species of gambling carried on at this club were poker, brag, euchre, all-fours, whist, "vingt-et-un," and "snaps" at faro. For use in the latter game, Giles had provided an old sheet-iron dealing-box, and about two hundred large horn buttons, besides a piece of black cloth with thirteen cards pasted on it, ranging from the ace to the king for a lay-out. The entire profits of the club went into the pockets of Giles, and was a very respectable revenue. Cards for playing all games except faro and vingt-et-un were sold to the players at twenty-five cents a pack, thus affording a clear profit of fifteen cents on every pack sold. At poker, a check was deducted from the pool, for the house, whenever threes or over were exposed, and at brag whenever a full was exposed; let the check be one cent or one dollar, the claims of the house were always the same. The house claimed ten per cent. of the winnings each "snap" at faro, and the same from the winnings of each game of vingt-et-un. Out of this revenue the house was expected to supply its guests with liquors and cigars, but when lunches were desired they were procured from the "Old Hickory Tavern," at the expense of the person or persons ordering. During the hours devoted to play, everything was done in a quiet and orderly manner. In fact, they dared not do otherwise. The fear of detection and conviction

held in check all who might otherwise have been disposed to be quarrelsome over their losses. Whenever differences of opinion arose regarding points of play or other matters belonging to the game, the question in dispute was left to the decision of any single person who could be agreed upon by both, and whose decision was final. If one or both parties were unwilling, as was sometimes the case, to leave the vexed question to the decision of a single person, each chose a referee, whose decisions were considered final, provided they could agree. In the event of their disagreement, the referees chose an umpire, who determined the matter. But this last method of settling a dispute was seldom required. Giles, being the high authority on all subjects in dispute, was generally appealed to, to give his decision—a duty he performed with the utmost willingness, whether able to do so properly or not.

The principal gatherings, and those which were the most lucrative to Giles, took place on Saturday evenings, when could be found gathered in the club-room the whole sporting fraternity of Marietta and its vicinity. On these nights, from four to five tables were in full blast, running poker and brag games, from five to twenty-five cent ante, while snaps at faro and vingt-et-un would be also going forward. The hickory-bottomed chairs and pine tables used for the games were concealed in the loft overhead during the day, and brought out at night, as they were wanted for use. None of the members or visitors to this club could be ranked even as third-rate players. The best among the members were two men named John Clarke and Richard Rathbon respectively, who were partners in a grocery store, as well as in their gambling operations. To these gentlemen the "club" had for many years been a source of profit. They did not cheat their adversaries at play, for the simple reason that they knew nothing about the method of doing so, but they were more skillful and cautious players than any others belonging to the club, or any of those who were in the habit of frequenting it. The next best card-player, after those I have mentioned, was an old member named Hicks, who was the owner of the principal blacksmithing business in the place. The old fellow indulged only in poker, brag, and all-fours. He was a shrewd and cautious player, never allowing himself to be disturbed by his losses, and for many years had

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been in the habit of visiting the club, and depending on it as a source of revenue. The three individuals named had been the chief winners for more than eight years, during which time it had yielded them a rich harvest. The most unfortunate member of the club was Jim Willis, the ablest lawyer in the place, but the poorest card-player. He was the best producer of money that frequented the place, always anxious to play high, and had proven himself a rich placer to the three worthies mentioned. John Travis, the landlord of the "Old Tavern," was a great support to the club, from the fact of his introducing so many of his guests there, but he was careful to present only those for whose integrity and secrecy he could vouch. Though Travis played but little himself, he managed to pocket a portion of the spoils by taking at times a stated interest in the play of Rathbon or Clarke, and occasionally in that of old Hicks. Nearly all the other frequenters of the place knew little or nothing about cards, and made their visits to the club more a matter of pleasure than gain. "But pleasures are like poppies spread," says the poet, and the verdant visitors to the club often were able to echo the sentiment to their cost, and found they had paid exceedingly "dear for the whistle," as frequently happens to visitors to all such places, who love to dabble in play for their own amusement. When this class of players win, a little satisfies them. When unfortunate, they increase their stakes in order to regain their losses, and in nine cases out of ten leave the table penniless. My foster-father, John Giles, was the most desperate player of the club, and comparatively a poor one. He either won everything in the shape of money there was to win, or, as was much more frequently the case, lost all his own. But he never gambled away more than the ready cash which he had on hand. As I made myself useful to the customers of my foster-father during the day, I soon extended my services into the evening, and made myself useful to the frequenters of that part of our establishment where the club assembled during the night. I soon made myself acquainted with the duties belonging to this department, and took care of the interests of my foster-father, according to the best of my knowledge and ability. Nothing afforded me more pleasure, at that time, than to watch the gamblers in their efforts to obtain possession of each other's money. The distance between observing and learning that

which interests us strongly is but short, and in little more than a year's time I could play all the games in vogue then, more scientifically than any member of the club. Many of them would at times play with me for stakes—even those who had sons of their own near my age. But I had grown up among their amusements, and the boy was forgotten in the companion. So I played, won and lost my money with them, and was treated in most respects as their equal. I was different from most boys of my age, who are apt to abuse a familiar intercourse with men; I did not seek the society of boys, even of those older than myself. Those persons I met in the card-room I never recognized on the street, unless first accosted by them; I was attentive and obliging to all, and, to use a slang poker-phrase, I never "chipped in" when conversation was taking place, unless it was quite proper for me to do so, and, young as I was, I gained the respect and confidence of nearly every visitor to the rooms.

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CHAPTER V.

## CAPTAIN WILLIAM SMITH

Was one of the persons introduced to the club by John Travis. He was commander and part owner of the steamboat "Statesman," then making weekly trips between the ports of Marietta and Cincinnati. Every Saturday night found her at the former town, where she remained until the Monday morning following, when she started again for Cincinnati. Capt. Smith was about forty years old, tall and thin, with stooping shoulders, lank black hair, which hung in long elf-locks about his ears, dark, piercing eyes, a hooked nose, and a very sallow complexion. Neither moustache nor whiskers adorned his moody countenance, and his gait was slouching and ungainly. His foppish style of dress added to his ungraceful appearance. A long swallow-tail coat, of fine black cloth, with pantaloons of the same material, a red velvet vest, a ruffled shirt with a high standing collar, and shiny stove-pipe hat, completed his attire. A large cluster-pin and four diamond studs adorned the bosom of his shirt, and around his neck was fastened an immense gold chain, while from his fob depended

another, to which was attached several large seals. He was a man of but few words, which, by the bye, were straight to the purpose, and drawled them out in a low, measured tone. The Captain, on being introduced to the club, said he never played any game at cards, except poker, and that only for amusement. His appearance created quite a sensation, and Clarke, Rathbon, and even Hicks and Giles expected to get some fine pickings from him. Of course they had but one night in the week to work him. On the night of his introduction they managed to get about eighty dollars out of him; but on the seven succeeding Saturday nights he did not once fail to rise from the table a considerable winner. The ante was at first only ten cents, which was gradually raised to twenty-five, and could some of the party, more especially Clarke and Rathbon, have had their desire, would have been raised to a dollar. But the Captain, strange to say, was a timid player, and refused repeatedly to have the ante raised higher than twenty-five cents. From such games as these, he won, night after night, sums varying from twenty-five to fifty dollars. Of course the boys thought him a very lucky customer, but his success, instead of discouraging them, only made them more anxious for his game, and impatient of their time, until Saturday night brought the "Statesman" into her well-known place at the wharf of Marietta.

The Captain, while seated at play, was always very uneasy lest his cards should be seen by the bystanders. He allowed no one to sit or stand behind him, and, after his first sitting, so placed his chair that no one by any possibility could overlook his hand, viz.: by sitting close in the corner and drawing the table to him. His behavior, strange to the members of the club—for all were accustomed to expose their cards freely to the bystanders—created no little speculation. The Captain became aware of this, and tried to explain his mistrustful manners, while at play, by saying that he was nervous, and that it annoyed him if any person looked over his shoulder at the face of his cards, before he exposed them on the table. Had the members of the club been professional gamblers, they would have concluded at once, from his actions, that his cards had been "itemed," but they were not even aware of the existence of such frauds. Such rascally tricks as "iteming" the hands of players were unknown at the rooms of our club. Whatever re-

marks his opponents might make at the table, in regard to his playing, the Captain heeded them not. He was cold as an icicle. His whole attention was concentrated on the game. He was never elated at his gains, or showed the slightest signs of anger or depression at his losses. He was a very indifferent player at poker; so much so, that the poorest player among his adversaries was more than his match. Yet he was almost constantly a winner!

I had formed a dislike to the Captain the first night he made his appearance at the rooms, which was not at all mitigated by his insulting me. On that evening, after he had taken his seat at the poker table, I stood behind his chair, from whence I watched his cards as he lifted them from the table. As soon as he discovered my presence, he ordered me away in a surly tone, and remarked that I was too young to be hanging round a gaming table. His remark was certainly a very true one, but it stung my pride, and made me his enemy. The more I saw of the Captain, the more I disliked him, though he never gave me any cause, after the night of our first meeting, except to treat me with the utmost indifference, and utterly ignore my existence, while every one else in the room were treating me as their equal. I had formed, from my many opportunities; a pretty good notion of play, and could at once perceive when players made bad, or foolish, or unusual plays. I was as proficient in this respect, at poker, or brag, as at any other of the short card games. The Captain's actions and manner of playing had on several occasions attracted, from me, more than usual notice. I observed that he played very badly, often making ill-timed bluffs, and that he was most successful in winning pools on his own deal; that he then bet more heavily, and that when his hands were called, he would show down on the table three of a denomination that he had exposed on the hand which had been called previously. I had seen this done as many as three times consecutively. I noticed, after some close watching, that he placed his cards at the bottom of the pack, when he shuffled for a new deal, and that he never disturbed these cards in the shuffle. All this made me suspect that the Captain had somehow the best of his adversaries. But how? was the question. It was beyond my comprehension. With all my boasted knowledge, I was at a loss to understand how he procured so many

large hands, when he dealt the cards. I mentioned my suspicions to Mr. Giles, and was told in return that I was a fool! which indignity only spurred me on the more to unravel the mystery. Could I only get a sight of his cards, I said to myself, the riddle would perhaps be solved. Such was the brilliant idea which flashed through my troubled brain, after cogitating for many days over the manner in which the Captain managed his game of poker.

To see his cards without his knowledge, or that of any one else, myself excepted, I hit upon the following plan: I bored a hole through one of the weather-boards of the house, in the corner where the Captain usually sat while playing, in a position where I could get a plain view of his cards. This I finished two days before the arrival of the "Statesman" in port, days which seemed to me weeks, so anxious was I to put my plan to the test. At last the eventful evening arrived, and with it the Captain. The game was made up of Giles, Rathbon, Willis, Hicks, and the Captain. The game was full-deck poker, the winner of the pool always dealing. (I mention this because twenty-deck poker was a very favorite game also, at that period, throughout the country; that is, to discard from the pack all the cards in the pack, except the kings, queens, aces, jacks, and tens. But when a game was made up of more than four players, the full pack was used. These games have long since fallen into disuse, and have been superseded by the popular game of draw poker.) The party each put twenty-five cents in the pool, none of them showing more than fifty dollars on the table. When the game was fairly under way, I left the room quietly and unnoticed, went to my place of espial, and silently withdrew the peg I had inserted, to prevent discovery. As I expected, my position was a favorable one. The Captain's cards, as he held them spread out in his hand, were as plainly visible as if I myself held them. For the space of an hour he held no pairs among his cards, which would win him a pool, and made several attempts on small ones, by making ill-timed bluffs, to win one, but was caught, and obliged to pay the penalty. In this luck he played until his stake had vanished, when he renewed it with fifty dollars more. Mr. Giles had his feathers up, and every bluff the Captain made he called him out or run over him and forced him to lay down his hand. He was using the



entire party pretty roughly, but the Captain showed the same imperturbable indifference as he was wont to show on former occasions when he was a winner. At the card-table, he was a worthy disciple of Zeno. Finally, he picked up a pair of aces, and with them won the first pool he had won since the play begun. These aces he placed together at the bottom of the pack. When he had dealt the cards, and picked up his hand, I discovered in it the identical aces which he had held before. He bet two dollars for the pool. Hicks called him, on a pair of queens, and lost. I saw the Captain again place his aces in the same position he had before done, and also his hand, at the bottom of the pack. My position would not permit me to see in what manner he shuffled the pack. Again he dealt, and when he once more lifted his cards, the aces made their third appearance. With these he won the pool, Giles being the sufferer in this instance, having called him on a smaller pair. When he showed down his aces, Giles remarked, throwing his cards face upwards on the table, "You couldn't hold four aces, Captain, for there's the ace of spades," (pointing at the same time to that card among his own).

"That's so," said the Captain, taking up the cards which Giles had thrown upon the table, and, placing the ace of spades between his two, placed the three aces at the bottom of the pack. When he had shuffled his cards, the portion cut off by his right-hand adversary he left on the table and dealt from the other portion of the pack. When he again raised his cards, I discovered all three of the aces in his hand, to wit, the two he first held, and the ace of spades. Willis bet three dollars for the pool. The Captain bet him ten more. Willis then threw up his hand, and the Captain raked down the money without showing his cards. When he again lifted his hand, after dealing, my old friends, the aces, made another appearance. This time Hicks lost, having bet two dollars for the pool, the Captain betting ten more, and being called by Hicks. Again was the same operation repeated, the brag was passed up to him, he bet again ten dollars. Rathbon called him, and discovered, to his chagrin, the three aces.

"What!" cried Giles, "three aces again? You must have charmed them, they stick so close to you!"

"They're good to hold in a tight place," said the Captain, in his cold, drawing manner.

The cards were again dealt; the Captain's cards showing three aces. The brag being passed up to him, he bet five dollars. Giles called him. "Show your papers, Cap," said Giles, seeing him hesitate. "As I cannot show anything worth seeing, I'll let you take the money, Mr. Giles," said the Captain, carefully putting his cards in the pack and shuffling them before he passed it over to Giles. The remark of Giles about the aces had given him a healthy scare, and before he would risk arousing suspicion, by showing them again, though such an event was hardly probable, he preferred to lose his money. I remained in my old position until I had seen him exercise on his adversaries three queens and subsequently three eights, manipulating them in the same manner as the three aces, when I replaced my plug and entered the club-room. Taking a seat in front of the Captain, in order that I might watch him closely, I was but a short time in solving the mystery of the three aces, the three queens, and the three eights; they were placed at the bottom of the pack, and not disturbed in the shuffle. The cards being dealt round, one to each, until the dealer comes to himself, rapid as thought he deals one to himself from the bottom instead of the top of the pack. This trick is now so old, that the most verdant fools refuse to submit to it; but for several years after it was introduced, many of the shrewdest gamblers in the country were victimized by it. Any person by practice can learn to deal from the bottom, but very few can become skillful enough to impose it on a party of players, without being detected. Like billiard players, they can obtain a certain speed, and no amount of practice can make them more perfect. I have seen many skillful "bottom dealers," but none who could equal Captain Smith. If his own statement was correct, he never had any instruction in it, and the principle of it emanated from his own brain; that is, he devised it himself, although the trick had been known to a few sharpers some years before.

The game continued until about four o'clock in the morning, when it was broken up by Captain Smith leaving the table, a loser for the first time since the night he joined the club. Even his advantage over his adversaries could not save him, and he left the table, a loser of one hundred and twenty dollars. Giles was the only winner, and, as is usual in such cases, was extremely happy—a state that owed something to the large number

whiskey toddles of which he had partaken during the evening. On our way home he held forth at great length on his superior excellence as a poker-player. "Didn't I tell yer, Jack, that the Captain was a flat? Hed a heap of luck, had the Captain, but I knew, if ever the luck broke, I'd make a fool of him. Eh, Jack? Let him keep on playing; you'll see if I don't fetch him from his roost. Eh, Jack? Ain't that so?"

"Yes, sir, I expect so," I replied, carelessly.

"No, you don't expect anything of the kind; you're a fool, I know you are! Didn't you tell me the Cap. was cheating us? Ha! ha! ha! ha! That's rich! Why didn't he cheat to-night? Didn't I make him squirm? When I beat that ace full for him I captured sixty good bucks from him on that hand. They may play their cursed nigger-luck on me for a while, but I'll bring 'em, whenever the papers breaks even, and every one of them fellers too! If they get ahead of Giles, I'll agree to root for acorns the rest of my life," etc., etc.

I allowed Mr. Giles to have all the conversation to himself, until we reached the house, when I turned him over to the care of my foster mother, and retired to my chamber; but it was long after daylight before I fell asleep. The discovery I had made drove away slumber. What should I do—expose the trick? Hatred urged me to expose the Captain. "Expose him!" also cried vanity. "Expose him, and receive the praises of your elders who had not brains enough to discover they were being fleeced by this man." "Pshaw! there's no money in exposure," said prudence; "don't be a fool; put money in thy purse. Ha! did not that prince of villains, Iago, say so? And is he not high authority on the subject? Who refuse to follow his sage and moral teachings? Does your meek minister of the gospel, your blatant moralist, or your astute lawmaker, or your ermined dispenser of justice? By no means! Does not each and all look out to take precious good care of number one, and feather his own nest particularly well? If the Captain's secret could be made beneficial to me, why should I expose it? Why should I give it away to others? No! no! Captain, my boy, I'll not expose you, but I'll try and make some money out of you."

## CHAPTER VI.

## DIPLOMACY.

About seven in the evening I repaired to the wharf, to meet the Captain, on his way up from his boat to the tailors' shop. My watch was longer than I expected, and gave me ample opportunity to collect myself for the interview. For the delicate piece of diplomacy, in which I was about to launch, I had had a full week to deliberate and arrange my plans. I had already settled Giles; that is, I had placed him in such a position as disabled him, at least for the present, from playing any more poker. That he would not borrow money for that purpose I knew, and consequently felt secure, as far as he was concerned, for a time at least. After his last game he had in ready money a little over six hundred dollars, and was, I knew, indebted to his cloth-merchant, Mr. Campbell, eleven hundred for goods. I urged him to pay over what ready money he had, towards the debt. "No," he replied; "I never make half-way payments." "But you may lose your money, and the cloth bill is really getting too large. Pay in what money you have, before you lose it, Mr. Giles," I remonstrated, but all to no purpose. "I shan't do it," he tartly replied; "I am going to win a pile with this money I've got; you see if I don't, Jack," he cried, shaking his head and mumbling on at me as if desirous of effacing any unpleasant impression.

Seeing that further attempts in this quarter would be useless, I changed my tactics by calling on Mr. Campbell, whom I requested to dun Giles for seven hundred dollars, explaining that he had nearly that amount on hand, and being in one of his spreeing moods, was likely to squander it. I told him that my only object was to save Giles, and requested that my visit might be kept a profound secret from him, as he would be very angry should he find I had been meddling with his affairs. Mr. Campbell, who had been for many years the warmest friend Giles had in the place, and who had never once, during the long period of their business relations, sent a bill to him, but allowed him always to settle his accounts with him at his own convenience, promised all I asked, and sympathized with my efforts to prevent

Giles from squandering his money. That same day he called upon Giles and presented his bill in full, on the plea that his merchants in Baltimore were pushing him for money, and begged Giles to pay what he could on account, if unable to meet the full amount. Such an appeal from this quarter was more than Giles could resist, and he immediately handed over six hundred and forty dollars, which was all he had, and told Mr. Campbell that he would borrow the balance for him immediately. Mr. Campbell insisted that the amount he had received was sufficient for his present wants, and the two parted the best of friends; Giles, to my great satisfaction, being left without a dollar in ready cash. My first effort in diplomacy having proved so successful, I was now waiting on the wharf to put my second in execution.

It was a beautiful evening in the beginning of April. No signs of life were visible on the levee, save the few lights that twinkled aboard the "Statesman," the only steamer at the wharf. The absence of drays, carts, and toiling men and brutes, told that the week's labor was ended on the wharf of Marietta. The clock on the court-house was just striking eight as I discerned the Captain crossing the gangway-plank of the Statesman. He walked slowly up the levee, with his eyes bent on the cobble-stones, as if he was afraid to lift them to the bright and tranquil moon which shone above him. Whatever may have been the subject of his thoughts, he was so deeply plunged into meditation that he did not hear my approach, although I tried to call his attention by clearing my throat loudly, and beating the cobble-stones with my feet. "A pleasant evening, Captain!" I said at last, when he was within a few feet of me. The unexpected sound of my voice startled him so much that he made a motion to run away; but quickly recovering himself, and ashamed, probably, of being detected in showing fear, demanded in a harsh, angry voice, without noticing my salutation, "What are you doin' thar?"

"Waiting to see you, Captain," I replied.

"Well! yer see me, don't yer? What in h—ll d' yer want?"

"Don't speak so confounded cross, Captain, I am not going to hurt you," I answered.

"No impudence, youngster, but tell yer business, if yer've got any, and be quick about it too."

"Very well, sir, I'll do so; I want to go halves with you in your poker games; here's my part for the stakes," I replied, holding towards him, with my left hand, a roll of bank-bills.

He stood gazing at me in speechless astonishment and anger for some moments, then hissed from between his closed teeth, "You want to go halves with me in playing poker, eh?"

"That's the business which brought me here to night," I coolly replied.

He stared so fiercely at me with his little black eyes sparkling with anger, that for a moment I imagined they were going to pop out of his head and shoot me; I stood my ground, however.

"It is, is it?" he finally ejaculated, still eyeing me from head to foot.

"Nothing more or less, Captain," I rejoined.

"Why, you d—d dirty cub, I'll whip the life out of you."

"I reckon not, Captain," I rejoined, in the same cool and tantalizing tone.

He made a spring for me, but I was expecting it, and jumped nimbly out of his reach. Being foiled in his efforts to get hold of me seemed to madden him. He again started for me. But I had too much speed for his bottom, and could have easily left him far behind, had such been my object. I allowed him to pursue me to the top of the levee, about fifty feet from where we first met, then turned and faced him. On he came, fully bent on doing me a mischief if I fell into his hands—a thing I was fully prepared to prevent. I drew from beneath the bosom of my coat, a large dragoon pistol, cocked it, and presented the muzzle towards his head, when within a few feet of me. "Stop, or I'll fire," I cried, in a determined voice.

The cocking of a pistol jars harshly on the ears of a foe. The unexpected sound, together with the flashing of the barrel in the bright moonlight, had a terrible effect on the Captain. My admonition was useless. The fight was completely knocked out of him; he placed both arms before his face, as if to ward off the expected bullet, and stooped at the same time, as if to dodge it. Baffled and cowed, he stammered, "Don't kill me, Jack, I didn't mean any harm."

"You did, you ruffian! You did," I almost shouted, for my blood was up.

"'Pon honor, Jack, I was only in fun; indeed I was! Now put

up that pistol, Jack, that's a good soul; it might go off accidentally, and you'd be sorry. Do put it up, Jack."

"No, I shouldn't be sorry for it, either. You'd whip the life out of me, would you? I've a good notion to send a bullet through your cowardly brains!"

"Don't, Jack; I meant you no harm; I tell you 'twas only a joke; do take away that pistol," he cried, imploringly.

"I will, on condition that you listen quietly to whatever I have to say to you."

"I'll do anything you want me to, Jack, if you'll put up that shootin'-iron: it might go off accidentally!"

"No, it shan't go off accidentally nor intentionally, if you keep your hands off me, and listen quietly," I answered, lowering the pistol, but holding it cocked in my hand, as security for his good behavior. "Now, Captain, we'll resume business if you please, without any more angry words."

"Yes, well, what is it you want?" he hurriedly asked, still trembling from the effects of his scare.

"Listen, and I'll tell you in a very few words."

"Go on."

"I want an interest with you in your poker-playing at the tailor-shop!"

"And what if I refuse?"

"Then you shan't play there any more."

"Why not? Who'll prevent me?"

"I will."

"How?"

"By exposing to the whole party the trick by which you have been packing off their money."

"I don't understand what you mean, Jack; it's all Greek to me."

"If you don't, it's because you don't want to understand," I replied; "but I shan't have any difficulty in making those people understand me, when I explain to them how you've been robbing them, by dealing from the bottom of the pack."

The accusation knocked him speechless. When he recovered the use of his tongue, he stammered out, "Why, J-J-J-ack, you're crazy!"

"Am I?" I asked, calmly. "Let's see if I am? I've been watching you for the last month, fully satisfied that you were cheating, but was unable to detect how until last Saturday night,

when I bored a hole in the house immediately behind you, so that I could see the cards in your hand as plainly as you could yourself. In the first place, Captain, I'll recall to your memory the first pair of aces you held during the play; with them you won the 'pot.' Giles exposed to you the ace of spades which you took, and put with your two aces. When you next dealt the cards, you held three aces, and you held the same three aces four times in succession. The last time you bunched them in the deck, after being called for a five dollar brag, because you were afraid to show them to the board again. Rather a bad piece of management on your part, Captain, to deal yourself cards on which remarks had already been passed, on account of your holding them so often, and then throw away five dollars on them, because you had not the courage to show them. Rather bad management that, Captain."

"Indeed!" sneered the Captain.

"Yes," I replied in the same cool tone; "I should not have dealt myself four aces the third time, and bet on them, unless I had sufficient confidence to show them to the board when my hand was called."

"What would you have done in such a case?" he sneeringly asked.

"Why, when Giles made the remark about your holding aces so often, I should have bunched them and waited until I had got some other kind of threes, and worked them on the party for a while, as you did the three queens, and afterwards the three eights."

When I had finished he neither moved nor spoke for several moments. At last he tried to force himself into action with an affected laugh, which, in sound, bore more resemblance to the bark of a dog than anything else. However, it acted the part of opening chorus, and gave him time to regain in a measure his scattered senses.

"A nice cock-and-bull story! So they made you a spy on me, eh? A fine den of thieves I've got into! I suppose they sent you here to assassinate me too, eh?"

"You've lost no money in the den of thieves, as you call it, and in whatever robbery has taken place there, you yourself have acted the part of robber; but if you carry off any more plunder from there, you'll have to divide equally with me. If I assumed the



character of a spy upon your actions, it was at the suggestion of no other person, but for the direct object of getting a share in the spoils, and I am too greedy to have any partner in the business except yourself; so the quicker we come to a friendly understanding the better."

"You say that you've told no one of this nonsensical suspicion of yours?"

"Not a soul!"

"What, not even to Giles?"

"No, not even to Giles!"

"That's wonderful!"

"Why?"

"Why? Because it was your duty to tell him!"

"Perhaps; but I want to make money, and had I told Giles I could not have done so!"

"Why not?"

"Because Giles is too honest a man to suffer his friends to be robbed if he knows it. Had I told him of this matter, the whole country would have known it within an hour."

"Well, my boy, I'm glad you've been so sensible! If you'd told this foolish story to them fellows at the tailor's shop, it might have caused some mischief."

"I'm perfectly aware of it, Captain."

"Very well, Jack," he said, in a half-coaxing voice; "I've no doubt you believe every word you've told me, but you're wrong; you've let your suspicions run away with your reason. Can't a man hold three aces half a dozen times, for the matter of that, in succession? There's nothing strange in that! I saw a man hold four Jack-fulls one after another, a few days ago, in Cincinnati. Nobody thought anything strange of that! 'cos they knew it was possible. I'm sorry such a foolish suspicion has got hold on you, Jack, and I'm d—d glad you've kept it to yourself; so there's no harm done. Now, Jack, I'm willing to forgive and forget everything, if you'll solemnly promise me never to mention this affair to any one living. Come! what do you say?"

"Yes, Captain, I'll keep your secret, and also swallow all you've been telling me, on one condition, which is that I shall be equally interested in all the poker games played by you in future at the tailor-shop."

"That's impossible! Don't think of it," he returned, shaking

his head. "What! to be mixed up in a gambling transaction with a mere boy!"

"I want to be interested with you in a stealing, not a gambling transaction, Captain," I retorted, getting considerably nettled at his assumed airs.

"Call it what you please," he said. "I'd sooner lose fifty dollars of my own money, any time, than one of a boy's."

"Which means, I suppose, that the game's too good to give any of it away."

"I mean nothing of the kind," he retorted, angrily. "I don't want to be concerned in any such business with a boy of your age."

"Boys of my age have sometimes more sense than men older than yourself."

"They think so, no doubt, especially when not kept in their proper places."

"Maybe you're right, Captain; but that's neither here nor there, in this case; and, as I have had sense enough to catch you dealing from the bottom on those sap-heads up there, I have also sense enough to benefit my pocket by the discovery; and, to close matters, you must let me have an equal interest with you, or you play no more at the tailor's shop."

"I must, eh?"

"That's the word!"

"And if I refuse, what then?"

"I'll expose you!"

"Very well; if that's your game, I'll not go there any more."

"Then I'll be sure to do it."

"What! Because I don't go there?"

"You must continue playing with the party, and allow me an interest in your games, otherwise I'll expose your tricks," I answered in a quiet, but firm tone.

"Well, I see your drift. But if you think, Jack, that you can bully me or force me into anything contrary to my own wishes, don't it, you're in the wrong channel."

This vain boast betrayed to me his weakness, and convinced me that my point was gained. "You control your own actions, Captain," I said, "but those fellows up there," pointing with my finger towards the shop, "won't like you any better, when they hear you've been chiseling them at poker; and, let me tell you, there's some ugly customers among that party. Can you afford

to have the report circulated all through the country, that Captain Smith is a common swindler at cards? I ask nothing unreasonable; I have my share of the money necessary; and, instead of gaining less by my being interested, you will make much more than if allowed to go on in your miserable picayune way. Why, man, there's ten thousand dollars to be won there!"

"Ten thousand lice to be won!" was the contemptuous reply of the Captain.

"That's all you know about it. I am speaking the truth, and if you will but listen to reason, and follow my directions, I'll ensure you five thousand for your share, in less than two months' time."

"From whom can it be won?"

"From several persons, but more particularly from Rathbon and Clarke, who are rich, and who have won in the tailor's shop during the last three years much more than that amount."

"And what about Giles?" he asked.

"He must know nothing of the business," I answered.

"Well, by G—d, you want to beat your own father!"

"No," I answered quietly. "Giles shall not play in the game."

"Why not?" he demanded.

"Because I have so arranged it that he cannot," I replied.

"I see! I see! A d—n nice trap you're trying to draw me into!"

"What trap, Captain?"

"How do I know? But I expect you want to get me into the tailor's shop and have me robbed and murdered."

"Well, Captain," I said, laughing, "I could not expect anything better from your distrustful nature; but listen to reason. If those fellows had made a plot to rob and murder you after you had entered the place, it was no use for them to send me to decoy you, as you have never failed to come of your own free will every Saturday night since the one you were introduced there—and you were on your way there when I met you a short time ago. The party are waiting for you, 'tis true; but to treat you with all kindness, as they do every visitor, and to win your money, if they can."

"But you say you've managed so that Giles can't play. D—n me if I see how?"

"I have said already, I dare not make a confidant of him, because he would not consent to have any one beat out of their money, by foul play, at his place. I have managed to keep him from playing by compelling him to pay his debts with what ready money he had, and it is not likely, I know, that he will soon have any more. So long as he has none, he will never bother us, because he won't borrow money to gamble with."

"You say you've got plenty of money. How much have you got now?"

"Enough to pay my way with if you should lose a thousand dollars."

"Why, how the h—l did you come by so much money?"

"As I am anxious to arrange this matter satisfactorily with you, I am willing to tell you everything you wish to know. What money I have, I have won during the last two years, playing cards at the tailor's shop."

"I never saw you playing any cards there, and I should not suppose any one would play with such a boy as you are!"

"Still I have done so, and every man you have seen there will and has repeatedly played with me."

"And you've beat 'em?"

"I've got their money to show for it, and what's more, besides winning it, have kept it in my possession."

"You're pretty good for your age, and if you keep up your lick 'till the hair comes out strong on your face, you'll be a light'ner."

"Well, Captain, I've now given you every assurance of my willingness to help you in making money, and also all the information you have asked me for, to erase from your mind the suspicions you seemed to entertain. Now are you willing to accept my offer? It is getting late, the party is waiting for you, and I want an interest in your game to-night."

"But you say you can direct how five times as much as I have been making can be made."

"Yes, twenty times as much! Nothing is easier. Increase the ante whenever they demand it, which Clarke, Willis and Rathbon are sure to do, whenever they are losers in a game. Any one of them will be willing to increase it up to ten dollars. None of the rest of the poker players will consent to play more than a dollar ante, and will drop out of the game, which will

make it all the easier for you. I want you to break Rathbon and Clarke—they are too greedy for my use; and you can do it if you will only shove a little more sand in your craw. If you don't want to risk your money, I'll take any share in the game you don't want."

"I can stand as much as you can," replied the Captain, sullenly.

"Well, pitch in then, and get their money; you'll find I'll render you more assistance than you'd expect."

"Well, Jack, do you think you could keep your mouth shut, if we started in together?"

"Yes, until the grave shuts over it; would not exposure injure me as much as yourself? Have confidence in me, Captain."

"Now, if I lose your money don't blame me for it, Jack!"

"If you lose it, I shall not cry for it; I made it by gambling."

I gave him two hundred dollars, and promised that I would be careful not to betray, by words or looks, that any intimacy existed between us, after which we separated.

It was arranged that I should call on board the "Statesman" each day on which she left for Cincinnati, to settle accounts and other matters connected with our compact.

That night the Captain played poker until after daylight with Clarke, Rathbon, Hicks, and a man by the name of Frazer. Towards morning the ante was raised to one dollar, and the Captain rose from the table the winner of three hundred and eighty dollars. I met him in his room on the Statesman shortly before she started, when he handed me over my money, and my portion of last night's spoils. As we parted he said, "Meet me on the wharf where we met last time, when we come back." I did so, and continued to meet him every Saturday night for three months, when the river got so low that the "Statesman" had to lay up at Cincinnati. The Captain sold his interest in her, and never made his appearance again in Marietta, at least while I remained there. During my connection with this man, I dreaded him, and never met him without being armed. That he hated me I was satisfied, and I doubt not would have done me an ill turn, had I ever been so unfortunate as to fall into his power. At our rendezvous of an evening, I watched him as closely as if he had been a rattlesnake, and I was looking for the fatal spring.

No words except those pertaining strictly to business ever

passed between us; our interviews were brief and entirely to the point.

His dealings with me were honest, and on the whole we divided between us, four thousand and seven hundred dollars, the most of which came from the pockets of Rathbon and Clarke.

I managed to keep Giles from playing cards with the Captain, by inducing him to pay over to Mr. Campbell, at various times, what surplus money he had. One night, while drunk, he insisted on having a hand in the game, and lost forty dollars, what money he had about him. He tried to borrow some, but as I had warned those playing, that he was unable to pay, he could get no loan to him, which caused him to leave in disgust, and go to bed."

## CHAPTER VII.

MAJOR GEORGE JENES.

The spring had passed away, and with it the volume of water which floated palatial steamers on the bosom of the beautiful Ohio. The long-sunken bars were drawn to the surface by the heat of the sun, and so confined the channel to such narrow and shallow limits as almost to impede navigation altogether. Had it not been for a few light-draught stern-wheelers, and occasionally a keel or flat-boat which struggled their way painfully, the bosom of the river would have been as destitute of life as when the savage glided over it in his bark canoe. The town was so dull that the arrival of a dinkey at the wharf or the stage-coach from the interior created no little excitement, and brought out a large portion of the inhabitants to stare at and speculate on the few passengers who arrived or departed.

Like the calm that succeeds the storm, gambling died away after the period of unusually high betting at the tailor's shop which marked the era of Captain Smith. He had now ceased to visit the place. Clarke and Rathbon, who had been his principal victims, grew despondent because they had no opportunity of recovering their losses. Old Hicks would not measure his skill with theirs unless more verdant players could be found to make up the game, for their losses had made them wolfish. The

pockets of Willis had been drained by the light-fingered Captain until he was unable to borrow a dollar more. Giles, it is true, was willing to play, because it was for his interest to have games going on in the shop, but he was no match for such players as Clarke and Rathbon and Hicks, and I used all the eloquence I was master of, as well as every stratagem I could devise, to deter him from playing. But my advice and remonstrance were equally thrown away. The only way I could succeed was to keep him impoverished. The money derived from his business, after the payment of necessary expenses, I applied to the payment of his debts, and the money which I received from the gambling tables for household expenses, or handed over to the custody of Mrs. Giles; and if more than she required, I gave it to Mr. G. to dispose of as he pleased. He was not by any means disposed to submit in silence to the arbitrary acts of his prime minister. Not that he objected to paying his debts, on the contrary he was very sensitive about his obligations, and at all times anxious to meet them; but when he had drunk a few glasses and wanted to gamble, he imagined that the claims of his creditors had no right to interfere with his amusements. On these occasions he would insist on my giving him money. He was aware that I kept on hand a stock of my own, but had not the remotest idea of the amount, neither had any one else; for I allowed no one to share my confidence regarding the strength of my treasury. Giles believed I had four or five hundred dollars, and, as he frequently remarked to his friends, a suction-pipe of forty-horse power could not draw any portion of it out of me. My frequent refusals to loan him money to gamble with made him very angry, and he indulged in such ill-tempered expressions, bitter gibes, and sometimes even threats of violence, as made my relations with him anything but comfortable. One day, while in one of his drunken and dominating moods, he began abusing me because I refused him money to play poker. I told him plainly that he must alter his style of behavior, or we must part company. He dreaded my leaving him, because I was in many ways useful to him, and, besides that, he entertained for me a rough kind of affection. His wife loved me as much as if I had been her own offspring, and this little circumstance having come to her knowledge, and the "gray mare being in this case decidedly the better horse," Giles was induced to alter his be-

havior towards me, and after this little affair, which took place a few months previous to my collusion with Capt. Smith, allowed me to conduct matters pretty much as I pleased. When the players, who were the nucleus around which were gathered all gambling operations which took place at the tailor's shop, could not keep a game going, the place ceased to be a centre of attraction, and the hearts of the "unco guild" were gladdened on beholding at night the dark windows and the death-like stillness which hung around the hated place.

But as a pebble dropped on the glassy surface of a lake will agitate its waters from shore to shore, so was the sporting fraternity of Marietta stirred by a report that the royal "tiger" had made his appearance in the place, and spread himself, for his prey, at the shop of Giles & Morris.

Faro had been for years a favorite game with the frequenters of the place; snaps were frequently opened, averaging from five dollars to one hundred, for which the sheet-iron dealing box and big horn buttons of Giles were brought into requisition. Sometimes as many as five or six of these snaps would be broken in a night, and but few were successful; which can be accounted for in this manner. The games were not dealt in proportion to the amount of capital in bank, or, in other words, the snaps were never limited; and as their capital was usually small, nothing but an extraordinary run of good luck at the start could save them from being broken. But a regular out-and-out faro game, with all its paraphernalia, and elegant mahogany box ornamented with a handsome picture of the royal "tiger," a fine silver dealing-box, six hundred ivory checks, on each of which was carved the head of a horse, their valuation at play being determined by their different colors; thus the colors being red, white, and blue; the first represented one, the second five, and the third twenty-five. Over the table was spread a fine green cloth, and on it a lay-out composed of thirteen cards, ranging from the ace to the king. Such a display had never before met the eyes of the crude gamblers of Marietta; and, withal, under the guidance of a full-blooded professional gambler.

Major George Jenks was an old friend of John Travis, and was by him introduced to Giles as a high-toned sporting gentleman. He obtained his consent to open his faro game at the



tailor's shop during the evenings. As he was the first professional sport, gambler, leg or black-leg, all of which terms are synonymous, of whose acquaintance I had the honor, I shall endeavor to sketch his portrait. He was about fifty-five years of age, tall, and well proportioned. His face was long and oval-shaped; his eyes dark and penetrating, above which met a pair of shaggy gray eyebrows, and his hair, of which he had a large crop, was also a shaggy gray. He imagined his complexion to be florid, but, with the exception of a deep red tint on the end of his nose, and the blossomy protuberances which adorned that facial ornament, it was much nearer the color of wet putty. His countenance might, with the aforementioned exception, be called cadaverous. When he made his appearance before the citizens of Marietta, he was attired in white linen pantaloons, a claw-hammer coat of fine blue cloth, an open black silk vest, a ruffled shirt, while around his neck was folded a large black silk handkerchief, turned over which his extensive shirt-collar shone immaculate. A broad-brimmed white beaver covered his shaggy head, and a small diamond twinkled among the ruffles of his shirt. A large gold fob-chain with several seals and small keys attached, dangled from his thigh; his feet were covered with brightly varnished shoes, and, to complete the picture, he carried in his hand a varnished hickory cane, ornamented at one end with a brass ferule, and at the other with a knob of fine polished gold, on which was engraved the name of Major George Jenks. He was born in Virginia—a fact of which he was inordinately proud; but where can the Virginian be discovered who is not? or where is the Virginian versed in the lore of his native State, who cannot trace his pedigree far back among some of the titled families of the British Isles?

His lantern jaws were entirely overworked; for, when not employed in masticating his food, they were always occupied—except during his hours of sleep—in crushing the juice from that weed so largely cultivated in his beloved native State.

Whenever the brains of the Major became heated from overdosing himself with the "essence of corn," he would hold forth at great length, and with much unction, on the superiority of Virginians in general, and the Jenks family in particular, to all creation. He would insist that his family were among the first settlers, and that its illustrious members could trace their pedi-

gree back to the Plantagenets; of which much-suffering name, and its bearers, he had, however, a very confused notion. He was aware that this august name was the polar star of all ichor-blooded Virginians, and he flourished it before us with the utmost looseness. The Major had but one country, his heaven and his earth—that was Virginia. When in one of his convivial moods, he delighted to talk of the generalship of Washington, the statesmanship of Jefferson and Madison, the eloquence of Henry, and the wit of Randolph. He denounced Clay and Jackson as humbugs and demagogues; and when reminded that Clay was a Virginian, he insisted that he was only a mongrel, who was obliged to leave his native State because he was unable to cope with the mighty intellects with which it was filled. In fine, no good thing, in the Major's eyes, could come from anywhere outside of Virginia.

Of when or how he obtained the title of Major, I am profoundly ignorant; perhaps he had belonged to the militia—the country, in those days, was filled with citizen soldiers—or, as is quite as likely, it had been awarded by his friends as an expression of respect; a way in which thousands of others have obtained their military titles. It is, indeed, a subject we cannot afford to be too curious about, in this country. I never asked him how he obtained it, nor did he ever volunteer any information, though he never failed, in putting his name to any paper, however insignificant, to adorn it with the title of "Major." He also aped the bearing of a military man, by shoving out his chest to what must have been a most uncomfortable degree, and keeping his head preternaturally erect.

His faro-table, covered with the implements of the game, created quite a sensation among his visitors, very few of whom had ever seen anything better, in that line, than Giles' sheet-iron box, big horn buttons, and lay-out of cards tacked to the table. Giles was careful that no persons should be admitted to the game, but such as wished to join in it. On the first evening, the Major had a lively game, in which he lost over three hundred dollars. It broke up by ten o'clock; the players, having all won, were satisfied; but the polite Major would not allow his customers to leave until he had treated them to a lunch, which he ordered from the "Old Hickory." Some of the winners objected to this, and proposed to make up a purse among themselves for that pur-

pose; but the suave Major carried his point, by telling them they were his guests, and as such must be treated, whether they won or lost, whenever they visited his place. After the lunch, liquors and cigars (red-eye and stogies), the best the place afforded, were introduced by the host, who could not have entertained his guests more agreeably, or with more true politeness, had he been doing the honors in an elegant drawing-room. They had won his money, and were now enjoying themselves at his expense; and he showed them by his manner that his losses held no place in his memory (or at least tried to make them think so, and succeeded), and that they could not do him a greater favor than to partake of his hospitality.

When a half-dozen or so of glasses of "red-eye" had somewhat enlivened the old fellow, he sang a love-song, in a fine manly voice, to the immense satisfaction of his hearers. I had given my entire attention to the wants of the Major, during the evening. I had helped him to arrange his faro-table, waited on the players, and afterwards brought the lunch from the "Old Hickory." The old fellow acknowledged my services, and thanked me, in the presence of all the company, after he had finished his love-song. He even went so far as to prophesy that I should some day represent my district in congress. The Major's idea of greatness ran altogether in a political channel. He showed much surprise when some one present told him I was the best gambler in the place, and, in a sorrowful voice, warned me to flee from cards, as I would from "the wrath to come."

"But you don't practice what you preach, Major," I laughingly said.

"That's so, my son," he rejoined; "but circumstances have thrown me into my present position, and I am now too far advanced to reform. 'It's hard learning old dogs new tricks,' you know; but that does not disqualify me from giving you good advice."

"No, Major, and I'm thankful for your kind intentions; but I'm afraid your good advice is only thrown away on me, because the same current which drifted you to gambling is carrying me along with it."

"Indeed!" he exclaimed, regarding me curiously; "pray, what current is that, Master Jack?"

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"Love of excitement and gain, sir," I rejoined.

"Damn me, gentlemen," cried the Major, bringing his hand down on the table so fiercely that the bottles and glasses rung again, "if I don't believe the youth on this side of the Ohio advance faster than those along our sea-shore!" After which forcible delivery of his opinion, he invited all hands to join him in another drink, which they were quite ready to do, being all capable drinkers.

"Then it's really your intention to become a gambler, Jack?" was the half-way inquiry of the Major, the round of liquor being tossed down the capacious throats of the company.

"So it seems, Major."

"Then I'm sorry for you, my boy. You've got a crooked and d—d stoney road before you, that's all I can say."

"Well, Major, can't you give him some advice how he can drive his team over that ar' road?" asked old Hicks, who was present.

"I can, sir, with pleasure, if he will listen to it; but before I begin, with your permission, sir (bowing to Hicks), we'll fill up our glasses and take another round."

The company met the call to a man, and, having supplied his cheek with a fresh quid of "nigger-head," the Major leaned back in his chair, stretched his legs under the table, and proceeded to enlighten me as follows:

"My young friend, remember that cleanliness, not to mention its being next to godliness, is the parent of health. Live according to your means, dress well, but avoid foppishness; make it your study to use good language and acquire the manners of a gentleman. Beware of intemperate and dissolute companions; never intermeddle with the business of others, or neglect your own for frivolous pleasure. Avoid quarrels and quarrelsome persons, and, above all, shun the company of abandoned women. Enter into no business transaction without first giving the subject due reflection, and, when in doubt, seek the advice of men on whose integrity and judgment you can rely. When your money or your honor is at stake, rely on your own natural sense, if you have no trustworthy friend at hand to advise you. Give your confidence to few; but should you ever be so fortunate as to have a tried friend, let nothing but death separate you, one from the other. Never borrow money under false pretenses,

however pressing may be your wants. Observe these instructions, my young friend, and, with the energy and personal appearance you possess, you cannot fail to succeed in the world."

"That's very good advice, Major, and worthy of a philosopher; but why is it not equally applicable to all other persons as well as gamblers?" demanded Mr. Willis.

"Quite true, sir, quite true; but it is much more requisite that a gambler should follow these instructions than any one."

"I don't see why," said Willis.

"Because integrity, upright behavior, and personal appearance are his stock in trade. Should he deceive his friends, or commit any other dishonorable or underhand act, all high-toned gamblers will shun him, and whenever they shun one of their own fraternity, every one else whose friendship is worth having will also shun him."

"The same remark will apply to other men, as well as gamblers," replied Mr. Willis.

"In a measure, certainly; but all other men are not such good judges of character as gamblers."

"Then you think gamblers better judges of character than other people?"

"Yes, sir," answered the Major, emphatically. "They are the best judges of character on earth, especially the gamblers from Virginia."

"Waal, that's all very fine, Major, so far as it goes. You've told Jack what kind of a team he wants to carry him over that ar' stoney an' twisted road o' yours, but you isn't told 'im how he's to drive it, and feed it on the way," chimed in old Hicks.

"If I understand you correctly, Mr. Hicks, you wish me to inform the young gentleman what he must do to succeed in the world, is it not, sir?" asked the Major, with one of his most dignified bows.

"That's it, old stud," rejoined Hicks.

"I shall do so, sir," said the Major, curtly, not much liking, I thought, the title of "old stud" conferred on him by Mr. Hicks; then turning to me he said, "Jack, my boy, never back a loser."

"That's very good advice, but how the h—l are you going to tell the loser from the winner?" inquired a big powerful fellow by the name of Jones.

"You don't understand me, sir, because you interrupted me

before I had elucidated my subject," said the Major, with much dignity. Without waiting for an apology, he continued, addressing me, "Never bet on an unlucky horse or an unlucky man. Whenever a breed of cocks have established their reputation, follow them up with your money. Be careful of a young race-horse, regardless of his pedigree; but whenever one of good blood has shown extraordinary speed and bottom, keep betting on him till he's beaten, then drop him. When you find yourself over-matched at a game of cards, drop your adversary as soon as possible; good card-players live on fools; be careful not to be one of the latter class. If any one offers to bet you he can perform any trick or feat, let him go by; for 'tis a hundred to one that if he finds any fools sufficiently green to take his bets he will win them. Should you see one person take advantage of another while at play, don't expose the fraud, but bet on him if you can find any one to take your wager. Don't squander your money, but keep it in readiness to make more with whenever the opportunity arrives. Choose your friends from moneyed men, because poor ones can be of no use to you."

"How old are you, Major?" asked Mr. Willis.

"Well, I'm going on fifty-five sir, and I'm able to drink as much whiskey as any man in this room; so I move we take a parting drink and go to bed."

"Excuse me, Major," said Willis, "but one more question if you please. Have you been following up this here advice you've given to Jack all them years?"

"No, sir, I have not," he stiffly replied; "for no person is capable of giving good advice until he's old enough to understand he's been a damned fool." The concluding part of the Major's speech was received with much laughter, besides a round of applause, after which, and a parting drink, the party separated for the night.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## FARO.

Faro may be termed a national game, as it is the favorite banking game of chance in this country. It has its origin in Europe, where it was played extensively during the seventeenth, eighteenth, and the early part of the present century; but such is the mutability of human events, that the game is now almost entirely unknown in that country.

At what time or among what nation of people the game of faro first made its appearance, tradition saith not, or if any recording scribe has ever left such a record behind him, all traces of it are now probably lost, which will not, I suppose, be looked upon by "society" as any very terrible calamity. The English claim that the game, like many of their other vices, was introduced among them by the Germans. The old tale, "brought up virtuous, and afterwards corrupted by bad company."

Hoyle is the first writer known to us who has given the rules, laws, and maxims of the game. He says in his book of games, "This game (speaking of faro) is a very peculiar one, played but little in England, and that it is purely a game for winning and losing money." The technical terms formerly used in playing this game being French, induces me to believe it was a French invention, and introduced into their own country by the English nobility, who were in the habit of adopting French games for their amusement, looking upon their national ones as vulgar. If the game of faro originated in Germany, it has long since lost all traces of its nationality. Whether Hoyle was correct or not in saying that faro was but little played in England, we find among the statutes enacted by parliament during the reign of the second George, one prohibiting gambling, under a penalty of two hundred pounds' fine, and among the games particularly mentioned are hazard, roly-poly, and faro.

I find no trace of the game farther back than this period.

We find in Washington Irving's tale of the great Mississippi bubble, a description of John Law, a Scotchman, who was the prime mover in that celebrated swindle. As far as relates to our subject, we shall give the author's own words. "Law remained

for a while in Paris, leading a gay and affluent existence, owing to his handsome person, easy manner, flexible temper, and a faro-bank which he had set up. His agreeable existence was interrupted by a message from D'Argenson, Lieutenant-General of Police, ordering him to quit Paris, alleging that he was *rather too skillful at the games which he had introduced*. This event took place in the year 1700. The faro which John Law dealt, and which Hoyle describes in his book of games, has not been in use over forty years."

As this game will bear an important part in these memoirs, it is necessary that the reader should become acquainted with its mysteries, its rules, maxims, and the manner in which it is conducted at the present time. For this purpose I have made an extract from the American Hoyle, which gives a full description of the game of

## F A R O.

Faro is played with a full deck of fifty-two cards. The dealer sits at the table prepared for the purpose, with an assistant or "looker-out" at his right hand. Upon the centre of the table is a suit of cards, arranged in the following order, upon which the players place their money or stakes, and which is called "the lay-out." It is composed of thirteen cards, either pasted or painted on a cloth. These cards are placed in two rows, running parallel with each other. The row next the players contains the king, queen, and Jack (which are called the big figure), ten, nine, and eight. The row next the dealer contains the ace, deuce, and trois (which are called the little figure), the four, five, and six. Next the six and eight is placed the seven. These three cards comprise what is called "the pot." Four connecting cards are called squares. For example, the king, queen, ace, and deuce, is called the "grand square;" the Jack, trois, four, and ten, the "Jack square;" the nine, eight, six, and five, the "nine square." A bet placed in a square includes the four cards; one placed behind any named card, except the king or seven, includes that card, and also the two adjoining ones. For instance—a bet placed behind the queen would include the king and Jack. A bet placed on the inside corner of any card includes the two cards next to it, as well as the one it rests upon, in all the States and Territories west and south of the State of New York,



but in the latter State, and those east of it, such a bet would bar both cards alongside of it, and include the card it rested upon, with the one diagonally opposite. A bet placed between any two cards includes those two. A bet placed on the corner of a card on the outside connects two cards, as a bet placed on the corner of the king would include the Jack, or one placed on the corner of the ace would include the trois, and leave out the queen and deuce.

The stakes usually consist of counters or checks, made of ivory, representing different sums. They are purchased of the banker, and are redeemed by him at the option of the holder. The banker usually limits the sums so bet, according to the amount of his capital.

The game may be played by any number of persons, and each player may select any card or number of cards upon the "lay-out," and may change his bet from one card to another, whenever he pleases.

#### DEALING THE CARDS.

The players having placed their stakes upon the "lay-out," and all other preliminaries being settled, the dealer shuffles the cards, cuts them, and places them face up in a small metal box, usually silver, which is a little larger than the pack to be admitted; this box is open at the top, so that the top card may always be in view. It also has a small opening at the side, sufficiently large to permit a single card to pass through it conveniently. As the cards are pushed out, or dealt from the top through this opening, the remainder of the deck is forced upwards by springs placed in the bottom of the box, and thus the cards are kept in their proper place until the pack is exhausted.

We will suppose, by the way of illustration, that the ace is the top card, as it appears in the box. This card is shoved through the opening when a ten appears—this is the banker's card, and he wins all the money which may have been placed upon it. The ten, like the ace, is removed, disclosing a king, which is the player's card, the bank losing all stakes found upon it. The drawing of these two cards is called "a turn," which, being made, the dealer takes and pays all the money won and lost, and then proceeds as before, drawing out two more cards—the

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first for the bank and the second for the player, and thus he continues until the whole pack is dealt out.

Whenever two cards of the same denomination, as, for example, two sevens or two fours, appear in the same turn, the dealer takes half the money found upon such card—this is called a "split," and is said to be the bank's greatest percentage, to avoid which old faro players wait until there is but one seven or four, or card of any other denomination left in the box, and then place their heavy bets upon that, thus avoiding the possibility of a "split."

If a player wishes to play upon the banker's card, or to bet any certain card will *lose*, he indicates it by placing a copper upon the top of his stake, and if this card wins for the bank the player also wins.

When there is but one turn left in the box, the player has the privilege of "calling the last turn," that is, of guessing the order in which the cards will appear, and if he calls it correctly he receives four times the amount of his stake.

#### KEEPING THE GAME.

As it is important for both dealer and player that the cards remaining in should be known, the game is accurately kept, so as to exhibit at a glance every phase of the deal. For this purpose, printed cards are given to the players, upon which they keep the game in the following manner.

No. 1.	No. 2.
A-0101	A-1
2-0000	2-00
3-1001	3-000
4-0011	*4-
5-0010	5-01
*6-101	6-011
7-1111	7-
8-1100	8-11
9-1011	9-011
10-1110	10-
J-X01	J-
Q-0000	Q-1
K-1100	K-0

No. 1.—This table, marked as the cards are dealt, exhibits what each card has done; the 0 means that the card has lost, 1 that it won; thus, the ace lost, won, lost, and won; the four lost twice and won twice; the seven won four times; the queen lost four times, and the Jack split, lost and won; the X indicating a split; the six was the top, or "soda card," as shown by the \*; the nine won, lost and won, the fourth nine remaining in the box, being the last, or "hock" card, which is indicated by the †.

No. 2.—This table illustrates a deal partly made. One ace has been dealt, and three remain in the box; two deuces have

lost, and two remain in the box; four was the top card, and all the sevens remain in the box, etc.

At this stage of the game cautious players would avoid betting upon the seven, ten, or Jack, preferring the trois, six, or nine, because upon these latter cards they cannot be split, as there is but one of each in the box, while the seven, ten, and Jack are all in the box, and are therefore liable to split or to appear before the others.

#### KEEPING THE GAME BY A CUE-BOX.

Another mode of keeping the game, common in the Northern States, is by a "cue-box," by which the different stages of the game are correctly noted by one of the players or by a regular "cue-keeper," who is usually attached to the bank.

The cue-box is a miniature "lay-out," with four buttons attached to each card. Those familiar with billiards will recognize this as the same method of keeping that game.

At the beginning of each deal, the buttons, which are placed upon wires extending from each card, are all shoved up to the card; as soon as a turn is made the buttons are pushed to the opposite end of the wire. If the Jack is the soda card, one of the four buttons belonging to that card is pushed to the opposite end of the wire. If the turn come a king, and then a four, a button from the king and one from the four is pushed to the opposite end of the wire, and so on to the end of the deal, so that, by a glance of the eye, the player can see how many of each card remain in the dealer's box.

#### TECHNICAL TERMS USED IN FARO.

*Banker or Backer.*—The person who furnishes the money for the game.

*Dealer.*—He who deals the cards, and takes and pays the bets.

*Cue or Case-Keeper.*—The person who marks game on the cue-box.

*Looker-out.*—The dealer's assistant.

*Checks.*—Ivory tokens representing money, with which the game is played; they vary in color, size, and value.

*The Hock or Hockelty Card* is the last card remaining in the box after the deal has been made. When one turn remains to

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be made, there are three cards in the box. They may be, for ex-  
ample, the five, six, and seven. We will suppose the last turn to  
be five, six, leaving the seven in the box, which would be called  
the *hock* card, because, as the game was originally played, the  
dealer took "hock," that is, all money which happened to be  
placed upon that card; the bank, therefore, had a *certainty* of  
winning that money, without the possibility of losing it; hence  
the term *hock*, which means certainty.

*A Deal.*—The dealer is said to have made a deal when he has  
dealt out the whole deck.

*A Turn.*—The two cards drawn from the dealer's box, one for  
the bank and the other for the player, which thus determines  
the events of the game, constitute a turn.

*Coppering a Bet.*—If a player wishes to bet that a card will  
lose (that is, win for the bank), he indicates his wish by placing  
a cent, or whatever may be provided for that purpose, upon the  
top of his stake. It is called "coppering," because coppers  
were first used to distinguish such bets.

*To Bar a Bet.*—A player having a bet upon a card, and wish-  
ing to bar it for a turn, must say to the dealer, "I bar this bet  
for the turn," pointing to it, in which case it can neither win nor  
lose.

*Last Call.*—When three cards only remain in the box, any  
player has the privilege of calling the order in which they will  
be dealt. This is termed the last call. The checks are placed so  
as to express the call, and, if correctly made, the bank pays four  
for one, and if a "cat," two for one.

*A Cat or Cat Harpen.*—When the last turn consists of two  
cards of the same denomination, and one card, as two tens and  
a king, it is called a *cat*.

*Paroli or Parlee.*—Suppose a player to bet five dollars upon  
the ace, it wins, and the dealer pays it; if the player then allows  
the ten dollars to remain upon the ace, he is said to play his  
*paroli*, which means the original stake and all its winnings.

*Pressing a Bet.*—To add to the original stake.

*Betting even Stakes* is when the player constantly bets the  
same amount.

*Stringing a Bet* is taking in one or more cards, remote from  
the one upon which the bet is placed.

*Playing a Bet Open* is to bet a card will win, not to lose.

*Repeating and Reversing.*—A card is said to repeat when it plays as it did upon the previous deal, and to *reverse* when it plays directly opposite; that is, if it won four times it is said to reverse if it loses four times.

*Snap.*—A temporary bank, not a regular or established game.

*Sleepers.*—A bet is said to be a sleeper when the owner has forgotten it, when it becomes public property, any one having a right to take it.

*A Bet or Case Card.*—When three cards of one denomination have been dealt, the one remaining in the box is called a *bet*, *case*, or *single card*.

*The Soda Card* is the top card of the deck, when put into the dealing-box preparatory to a deal.

*Snaking a Game.*—A game is said to be snaked when the dealer's cards have been stolen, and privately returned, marked, or prepared in such a manner as that when they are dealt, the snaker knows what cards will win or lose. Faro banks are often broken in this way.

*Throwing off a Game.*—When a dealer, by a preconcerted plan, allows a player to win, he is said to throw off the game.

*Catching a Turn.*—Sometimes the dealer is so careless in shuffling his cards, that a shrewd player will know what cards have not been separated, or will have some other advantage by which he will beat the turn; this is called "catching a turn."

#### LAWS OF THE GAME.

The rules of faro are few and arbitrary, and are based upon principles of justice and equity. All questions or points of controversy which may arise during a deal, may at once be settled by referring to the general rules or principles of the game.

All bets are to be taken or paid as they lie upon the card, except there is an express understanding to the contrary. The *intentions* of a player are not to be considered by the dealer; his bet being supposed to represent his intention.

If a player wishes to bar a bet on a card, he must make the dealer understand that he bars it, when it will remain barred until he says "It goes."

If a player should put a bet upon a card, and say to the dealer, "One half of this bet goes," it would be so understood until the end of the deal, unless the order was revoked.

Should a player or the dealer, by design or accident, remove or alter a bet belonging to another, he is responsible for its loss.

When two players bet the same stake "single" upon different cards, one coppered and the other to win, and they both win upon the same turn, the copper bet, being the first to win, must be paid.

The dealer must pay all bets for which he turns, provided they are made in checks, but only the limit of the game if in bank bills.

The dealer should take and pay correctly, and not make mistakes by design or through carelessness; nor should he alter the position of the cards dealt, but allow them to remain upon their respective piles undisturbed.

When the players have broken a bank, the dealer must take and pay the largest bets first. Suppose the bank to have but one dollar left, a turn is made by which the dealer wins one dollar and loses two; he must take the dollar he wins, and pay the dollar lost; the rule is to take and pay the amount of the bank in sight.

The dealer has the right to close his game, or to quit dealing, whenever he sees proper to do so.

Players have the right to count, or otherwise examine the cards of the dealer, if they suspect foul play, or if they wish to guard against it. In all cases the dealer has the right to the last shuffle and cut; and where he permits a player to shuffle or cut, it is an extension of courtesy to the player, and not his right.

#### THE CHANCES OF THE GAME.

The percentage in favor of the bank is generally estimated to be about three per cent., but the average is evidently more than that. Some players reduce the percentage against them to almost nothing, while other players, less experienced, give the bank enormous advantages. With all players the percentage varies with each turn of the cards, so that no proper estimate of the bank's advantage can be made. One thing, however, is certain—all regular faro players are reduced to poverty, while dealers and bankers, who do not play against the game, amass large fortunes; and, again, the higher order of faro-rooms are gorgeously furnished—luxurious suppers and costly wines

are gratuitously offered to players, and the proprietors are everywhere distinguished for their reckless extravagance. *All this* is sustained by the percentage of the game.

Almost every faro-player has some peculiar system, which he strives to believe will beat the bank, and which sometimes does realize his hopes; but, in the end, all systems fail. The truth is, the game is based upon certain mathematical principles, giving it a percentage which no system of playing can overcome.

#### CALLING THE LAST TURN.

The bank's greatest percentage is when players call the last turn, as is here illustrated:

Suppose the cards remaining in the box to be the 4, 5, and 6; the turn may come 4, 5-4, 6-5, 4-5, 6-6, 4, or 6, 5. Therefore it may come six different ways, but he who calls it correctly receives only four for one, or four times the amount of his stake.

When the turn happens to be a "cat," it may come three different ways, but the bank pays only two for one.

No better exposition could be given regarding the rules, laws, and maxims which govern faro as it is dealt at the present time in this country. But when the author tells us that the percentage in favor of the bank is generally estimated at three and a half per cent., he displays his absolute want of knowledge upon that subject. Faro is the only banking game of chance known to us, whose percentage cannot be clearly defined. The best algebraists among the gambling community of this country have been unable to show us that faro has one and three-fourths per cent. in its favor.

The author also informs us that "all regular faro-players are reduced to poverty, while the dealers and bankers, who do not play against the game, amass large fortunes." With all due respect, he does not know what he is talking about. He must have derived his information from hearsay, and could never have consulted intelligent gamblers on the subject. There are thousands of persons who have played against faro games, almost every day of their lives, from budding manhood to old age, who have never been reduced to poverty. I can recall

many such cases under my own observation, where the parties are still living, with ample means to sustain themselves and those belonging to them. I also doubt if there are in the country, or have been within the last thirty years, twenty persons who have amassed a fortune of one hundred thousand dollars by faro-dealing. I have known within that period, myself, hundreds of faro-bankers who have never made more than a respectable living from their business.

The author says: "The higher order of faro-rooms are gorgeously furnished and decorated, luxurious suppers are gratuitously furnished to the players, together with costly wines, and the proprietors are everywhere distinguished for their reckless extravagance, etc., and all this is sustained by the percentage on the game."

The author, as well as the public in general, has a most erroneous opinion on the subject of gambling-houses and gamblers, and is as unable to distinguish between fair gambling, and swindling under that name, as to understand the difference between a card-sharper and an honest gambler. To separate these characters, to place gambling, as carried on in this country, in its true light, to expose "card-sharping" in all its deformity, before the reader, is the principal object of the writer of this book. On this matter I shall speak fully in its proper place.

There are in our large cities many of the upper class of gambling-houses who furnish suppers gratuitously to their patrons; and some of those, which deal what is called "day-games," give dinners, but none furnish wine to their guests, nor are any of these fitted up otherwise than respectably and comfortably, that is to say, neither gorgeously nor luxuriously. The expense often in some houses amounts to ten dollars per day, and in others from twenty-five to fifty per day—an expense which any bank having select players, and doing a fair business, can well afford. During the civil war, when money was plentiful, a few houses in the city of New York did furnish luxurious suppers and costly wines to their customers; but these houses did not number four in all, and their unusual entertainment did not last over a year. The houses which furnished them could well afford to do so, as each of them had an opportunity to win or lose daily from twenty to thirty thousand dollars, and the amount made from splits by such heavy play was enormous.



In New Orleans it was customary for such houses as gave entertainment, to set ordinary claret wine before their guests, but no other kind was given by any of the "square" gambling houses in that city.

I am led to believe that we are indebted to the French for the game of faro, from the fact that all the peculiar technical phrases used in playing the game were originally in that language. As "*punters*" (players); "*couche*, or *enjeu*" (a bet); "*coup*" (a turn); "*doublet*" (splits); "*l'un pour l'autre*" (stand off); "*opposé*" (copper bet). All these terms were in common use until American innovations were introduced into the game, which commenced some forty years ago. It first flourished in Louisiana, and from there spread throughout the Union. When gambling-houses first were licensed in New Orleans (some forty-five years ago), faro was played upon a large oval table covered with green cloth; on one side was the "*tailleur*" (dealer); and on the other his "*croupier*" (look-out); dealing-boxes had not then been invented, and gold, silver and bank-notes answered the purpose of checks.

When the dealer had shuffled and cut his cards, he held the deck firmly in his left hand with the face downward. When the players had made their bets, he turned over the top card and placed it face upwards on the table. This card was for the bank. Then in the same manner he exposed the next card, this being for the players. As the dealer made his turns in this wise, his "*croupier*" took the bets the bank won and paid those which it lost—the sole duty of the dealer being to attend to the cards; the *croupier* fulfilling all the other duties of the game. These games were generally with a limit of twenty-five dollars, but the bankers would increase the limit when rivalry sprang up between different houses, in order to draw patronage, or when a rich customer refused to play unless the limit was increased for his especial accommodation.

In such cases the limit was usually raised by giving to the player the privilege of going his paroli. For example: if he bet twenty-five dollars and won, he could let his stake and its product remain, which allowed him to bet fifty dollars. Sometimes the paroli was allowed to be repeated twice, which enabled the player to realize (supposing both stakes to have won) one hundred and seventy-five dollars. This method of betting is

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termed a running limit, and has been almost universally adopted by the faro-bankers of the United States. Bankers made their limits to suit their capital, small games made their limits thus: Three dollars the amount of the first stake, with the privilege of paroling it twice and taking down twenty-four dollars. Other banks made their limits six and a quarter, with the privilege of running it to fifty. Still others, twelve and a half, with the privilege of running it to one hundred, while others allowed the first stake to be twenty-five, with the privilege of paroling it to two hundred dollars, and a very few made their limit fifty, with paroli to four hundred.

Dealing-boxes were invented for protecting the bank. However careful a dealer might be with the pack of cards in his hand, scores of sharp eyes were ever on the alert to take advantage of the least scratch, speck, or bend, and to turn it to their own account. In this case it was the banker only, who was liable to become the victim of wily sharpers. But about the year 1833, or perhaps a year earlier, it was discovered that the player also required some protection. Somewhere about this period an old German, named Swigel, made his appearance in New Orleans. This worthy old gentleman was direct from Europe, and could neither speak English or French. After taking a bird's-eye view of that fast city, he concluded that he could make a fortune there running a faro-bank. By his address and money combined, he managed to procure a half interest in one which was located in one of the principal gambling-houses in the city. For more than six months he went along swiftness; his game having won in that time some sixty thousand dollars. The principal moneyed gamblers played against his bank, because he gave to them a larger limit than any other banker in New Orleans was willing to do. In fact, at times the old fellow did not believe the limit of a faro-bank was worthy of a thought. Many people, observing his eccentric habits, believed him to be insane, or at any rate "a little deranged;" but, in spite of all, he managed to haul in whatever money was bet against the bank. He never associated with any one, and in the mornings could be seen taking his solitary walk in the suburbs of the city. In these promenades he always carried in his hands a pack of cards, and kept his arms in constant motion, as if dealing for his players. Finally the old fellow was one evening detected in the act

of taking the second card from the pack while dealing a heavy game. This operation of course altered the turn, by throwing the card which belonged to the player in favor of the bank. In the general row that ensued, the worthy old gentleman made his escape in safety, and was never heard of afterwards in the city of New Orleans. His bank, which contained at the time about six thousand dollars, was seized by the players, together with his cards, which were discovered to be all privately marked. This, however, would have been of no use to him, unless he could have changed the position of the cards in the turn, a thing which he accomplished with such unerring dexterity that the shrewdest gamblers in the land failed to detect it for months. Though the house shared equally in the profits, it is more than probable that none of its proprietors were in the old fellow's confidence.

As long as public gaming was allowed to exist in New Orleans, rules and maxims for playing faro were established, but when, in 1836, the license-law was repealed, selfish men, in order to benefit their pockets thereby, spiced upon the game many unjust laws and innovations. The cases were not allowed to be kept, bets once placed on the "lay-out" were not to be removed until an action on them had taken place. The object of this was to keep players in ignorance of which cards were "cases," and to confine their bets to double, treble, and quadruple cards. "Hock" was revived by many bankers, while in licensed gambling-houses it was thrown from the game. But it was only cross-road gamblers and those who dealt faro-games at race tracks, that claimed "hockelty." The only chance a player had to escape "hock," was when the cards in the last turn were all "cases." If any two of these three cards connected, he could so place his bet as to include the connecting cards, and by so doing either won, lost, or had a stand-off for it. But if a "cat" was in the last turn, he had either to risk losing his money in "hock," or to risk having his bet split, and he could not take the latter chance unless the case and the double card were connectors. Should the last three cards be, for example, the king, four, and seven, none of which connect—and in those days no bet was allowed to include any card which did not connect—the players who had bets on any of the cards mentioned could not remove them, thus giving to the bank a percentage of 33½ per cent. on all stakes placed on case cards on the last turn.

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Competition, and a more liberal spirit on the part of gamblers, have destroyed the old-fogy system of playing, and have divested faro of the fraudulent rules foisted upon it by unscrupulous men. For this desirable revolution we are indebted to eastern gamblers, more especially those of New York. The change was gradual, and it was only after a struggle of years in duration that faro was brought to its present perfection. First, "hockety" was abandoned, then cases were allowed to be kept by the players with counters, or checks, to mark the game. This soon led to the introduction of "cue-boards," or "case-keepers," and shortly after that to "cue-papers." But the great struggle was between the running and the open limit: the former being far more advantageous to the bank. In the first place it is advantageous to a bank to compel a player to win his bet three times in order to win his highest limit. The odds are seven to one he will not succeed. Besides this disadvantage, the running game forced reckless players to play on double, treble, and quadruple cards, which they often did in order to run their first stake to the extreme limit, so as to bet it on a case card. The bankers would not allow players to pick up their bets from double, treble, or quadruple cards, until an action had taken place on them; but the owner of a bet had a right to include with it any connecting card or cards. The greedy bankers also exercised their arbitrary rules to such an extent, that they would not even allow a player to bag his bet for a single turn after he had once won it, or its paroli; and if he removed it from the lay-out, for even a single turn, his next bet was reduced to the original limit. It will be easily understood, from this compulsory method of dealing faro, that the object was to drive the players upon double cards, thereby enhancing the percentage of the bank by splitting their bets.

A faro-bank dealing the "copper" game, and with a limit of twenty-five dollars and one hundred dollars, that is, the privilege to paroli twenty-five to two hundred dollars, can be beaten by a player at a single deal, out of two thousand eight hundred and seventy-five dollars; but if the player lost every time possible on the deal, the bank could only win from him one thousand two hundred and fifty.

An open limit means when a bank takes a stated amount, which may be bet by a player any time during the deal. A game

of this sort, dealt with a limit of fifty-four dollars, would be equal in money to a running limit of twenty-five, and one hundred dollars. Either of these games may be beaten on a single deal, providing no split happens, out of two thousand eight hundred and seventy-five dollars, and the bank, with an open limit, may win the same amount on a deal; while the one with the running limit could only win one thousand two hundred and fifty dollars. But as the odds are 98,729,443,094,784 to 1, it is not probable that we shall ever hear of any person winning or losing on every card throughout a deal at faro. This calculation is merely intended to show the difference between what can be won and lost during a deal of faro having an open limit, and one having a running limit. The running game in bad luck can lose double the amount it can win in good luck; while the open game can win as much on a deal as it can lose. It would appear, at the first glance, that the open game would be the best for the banker; but such is not the case. The paroli is a heavy percentage in favor of the bank, besides having a tendency to force players, as I have already stated, on double cards; thus giving an opportunity to split the bets, which can in a great measure be avoided at the open games; for the cautious player may greatly reduce the percentage, by playing on small double cards until a case appears, when, if he wishes, he can bet the limit, and have an even chance for his money.

The open game of faro was first introduced into New England, and shortly after made its appearance in the city of New York; where, in the course of a few years, it usurped the place of the running game altogether. No faro games with any open limits were dealt in the Southern and Western States until after the Mexican war. That event exerted considerable influence on the introduction of the open game into the cities of New Orleans, St. Louis, and Cincinnati. When the City of Mexico was captured by the American forces, many faro dealers from the States flocked there. They found on their arrival there that monte was the attracting game; even professionals played against it rather than the small faro games, which were dealt with running limits of twenty-five and one hundred dollars, and many even less. There was plenty of money, not only among those gamblers who followed the army, but among contractors, merchants, and officers, numbers of whom would be willing to patronize faro, if dealt on a liberal scale. A rivalry relative to procuring players sprung

ars, would be equal in one hundred dollars. Single deal, providing hundred and seventy-it, may win the same running limit could fifty dollars. But as is not probable that losing on every card is merely intended to on and lost during a having a running limit. ple the amount it can win as much on a deal glance, that the open such is not the case. of the bank, besides ve already stated, on split the bets, which open games; for the percentage, by playing s, when, if he wishes, ace for his money. ed into New England, ne city of New York; ped the place of the with any open limits tates until after the nderable influence on cities of New Orleans, r of Mexico was cap- ealers from the States there that monte was ayed against it rather t with running limits and many even less. g those gamblers who merchants, and officers, onize faro, if dealt on uring players sprung

up among the gamblers, especially among those newly arrived. Banks were opened with running limits of fifty and two hundred dollars, then with limits of one hundred and four hundred dollars. Such limits were only seen at the Mississippi land-sales, and in Mobile, when Brandon money was issued by the cord. Finally a Tennessee gambler named Andrew Rogers opened a bank, and declared his limit to be an open two hundred dollars. The idea was new in that place, and the players could bet their money as they pleased, without being trammelled by old-fogy notions and rules. The new game was a success, and received the principal patronage, and several others, not to be outdone, also proclaimed their games to be an open limit of two hundred dollars. Competition actually forced the new game on many bankers who thought it had no percentage in its favor. But they soon discovered their error. Many of these bankers, when peace was concluded, opened their games in New Orleans, St. Louis, Cincinnati, Louisville, and the watering-places of Kentucky. These games were dealt with an open limit of one hundred, and sometimes fifty dollars. From that time the open game became, throughout the Southwest, extremely popular, and would undoubtedly have broken up all the running games in the country, had not the California excitement at this time drained the country of its most liberal gamblers, leaving behind only an old-fogy class, who were terrified at the very name of "open game of faro." So this game was left exclusively to the city of New York and the New England States, in which last section it had its origin.

The principal faro-bankers who reached California early in 1849, had been in the City of Mexico. All these set up the banks with open limits. When the public gaming-houses had got well started, the proprietors adopted the running limits of twenty-five and one hundred dollars in their public saloons; but in their private rooms all their faro games were dealt with open limits, and when the New York and New England gamblers arrived, they also dealt it. After the suppression of public gambling-houses, there was not a running game of faro in the State of California. The returning California gamblers, with the assistance of those from New York city and New England States, finally wiped out every vestige of it from the United States, and scarcely a game of the kind could be found there after the year 1859, and 'tis now extremely doubtful whether one can be found on the continent of North America.

"*Opposé*" was identified with the old game of faro, as mentioned by Hoyle in his book of games. It means, translated into English, "copper-betting." But the early faro bankers of this country expunged it from the game, believing it to be unfavorable to their interests. They were unable to understand that the more inducements they offered to players to stake their money, the more chances the bank had to split it. Still, copper-betting was kept up in spite of the bankers, until it again found a place in the game. Offers would be made and taken among players that such or such a card would win for the bank; such wagers were termed "flyers," and were frequently taken by the bankers themselves. When a player offered to make a bet of this kind, and the dealer or any of his assistants accepted it, the stake was placed on the designated card and a copper cent placed upon it to distinguish it from the other bets on the "lay-out." About the year 1845 the faro-dealers of New York city received copper bets as a constituent part of the game for the first time. From that city it spread through the State, and was adopted by the dealers of the New England States. But the dealers of Philadelphia and all cities south or west of it refused it until many years later, and even then it was forced upon them by competition. In 1853 the first copper game was opened in Philadelphia, and was introduced by a party of returned California gamblers. It was three years later before one was opened in New Orleans, and but few of the faro-bankers south of the Potomac River or west of the Alleghany Mountains adopted it before the year 1857; nor would they have done so then, had it not been for the gamblers from California, New York, and the New England States. These nomads were traveling over the country and setting up their games wherever players could be found; and, by playing the copper game, succeeded in leaving the local banks deserted—a proceeding which forced the dealers to adopt it also. In this manner it was rendered a constituent part of faro. Notwithstanding the rivalry existing among the faro-bankers in the city of Mexico, and their bids to procure players, so fearful were they of the copper-game, that but one bank in the city adopted it, that being the one mentioned as running with an open limit. Some of these bankers would at times risk their money on games with open limit, but refused to play the copper. We find a few years later that this dread had

somewhat worn off. Most of the first-class gamblers who came early to California dealt it. One was opened in San Francisco early in 1849 that dealt the copper, and without a limit. Those in public saloons played a running limit, but admitted the copper only on the last turn. In fact, nearly all the games throughout the State, that dealt a running limit, conducted their business in a like manner, but those who dealt an open limit played the copper.

It was the prevailing belief among a large majority of the gambling fraternity that the copper game was disadvantageous to the bank, and so impressed were many of them with this idea, that they would take no stock in such a game. They also believed that more cases would lose than win in a stated number of deals. For two or three years after the discovery of gold, gamblers could be found daily in front of faro-banks, endeavoring to solve this problem by coppering the cases with even stakes, but most of them got the worst of the bargain and retired "dead broke."

For many years after coppering became an established part of the game, it was the general belief that coppering a double card was disadvantageous to the player, regardless of splits. "If two cards," they argued, "lie together in the dealing-box, they must split, or the first that appears must win; consequently the bank will either split the bet or win it; whereas, if the bet had been played open it must win if the cards do not divide." In that case the player loses but half his money, which is tantamount to his betting one to two. Such reasoning is very illusive, but it has its hold on many of the gamblers of the present day. We will say, for instance, that the player coppers the double ten with a dollar; if the card does not split it wins and he loses. If it was destined the first ten should win, so was it that the second should lose, for it lies under that exposed on the box; then let the player copper the ten for another dollar, and he is even; it, in fact, equalizes the whole matter. To support their argument against coppering double cards, they say, "When a card splits, the first one on the turn comes a winner for the player, when the next one dashes reality aside and makes him lose half his money; thus making a difference of seventy-five per cent. against him in appearance." "On the contrary," they say, "had the bet no copper on it, the appearance of the first card on



the turn warns the player that his money is lost, when the agreeable sight of the second returns half his money, thus in appearance making him a gainer by fifty per cent. by the turn."

From such reasoning as this we receive no instructions in the doctrine of chances, and they only serve to display the sudden transitions from sorrow to joy and from joy to sorrow, which take place in the mind of the player, as he watches the issue of his stake while the dealer is making a turn. If a card split it was destined to do so when the player placed his stake upon it, and also destined he should lose half his stake if he allowed it to remain until the split took place, and whether he placed a copper on his stake or left it open, he still loses half, no more, no less. Nor could the copper, on or off his bet, influence it favorably or otherwise. All process of reasoning to the contrary is fallacious. The bank has a decided advantage over bets placed on double, treble, and quadruple cards, because when a card splits it takes half the money found upon it. Upon case cards the bank has no percentage; all reasoning to the contrary is defective.

Calls were first adopted in the city of New York about the same time as the copper game, and after a great length of time finally became one of the principles belonging to faro. Still, there are yet to be found in the South and West, bankers who refuse to receive them at their games, and who are incapable of comprehending that "calls" are the heaviest percentage in the game of faro. When there remains in the box but one turn, the player has to guess the order in which the cards will appear, in order to win his call. The chances are five to one against his doing so; yet, if he succeeds, he is only paid four times his bet, which makes the percentage on calls twenty per cent. in favor of the bank. On a "cat" it is two to one that the player cannot guess the order in which the cards will appear, and if he succeeds he is paid twice the amount of his stake. It is generally conceded by intelligent gamblers, that the bank has no percentage on "calls" made on a "cat."

Many mathematicians have set their brains to work to discover the exact percentage on faro, but in every instance they have ignominiously failed. They have told us that on one thousand deals of the game, the splits on each deal will average one and one-half. Some of these astute calculators have told us that two splits per deal is a fair average, but it seems none of them, as

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yet, have come to any definite conclusion on that or any of these points. They have also told us that a pack of cards in twenty-five turns, counting the "soda" and "hock" as "dead" cards, can come six hundred and two different ways, counting among that number, twenty-five splits which may take place. They have calculated the chances of quadruple, triple, and double cards splitting at any stage of a deal. Still these clear heads are unable to arrive at the exact percentage on the game. Some think it will reach two and one-half per cent., while a majority of the most intelligent gamblers in the country believe it will not exceed one and one-half.

## CHAPTER IX.

### DEPARTURE.

The assiduous attention which I paid to the Major and his patrons completely won his heart, and gained me the friendship of that remarkable man. I "looked out" for his faro game, and made deals for him, whenever he was tired. From the first night on which he opened his game, he had a full table of players, who were steadily eating up his bank; night after night it lost, and night after night the smiling Major paid his losses with as much good humor as if the money were going into his pockets instead of out of them. The blind goddess seemed to have deserted him, but he never complained. He dealt a running limit of six and a quarter, and twenty-five, and confined his players strictly to that limit. But Clarke, Rathbon, Willis and Giles were the only players who would venture that amount. The players, being successful, would usually win enough to satisfy them for the nonce, and leave the room as early as eleven o'clock. If Giles or myself offered our condolence to the Major, on this unsatisfactory state of affairs, he would reply, "I'll win when my time comes, and not before, sir." After the players had left, it was the custom of the Major and Giles to have a "set-to" at politics over their glasses. The latter was a whig of the most rabid sort, and a great admirer of Henry Clay. The Major espoused the cause of no party or individual who had not received

the stamp of approval from Virginia. He disliked Clay and Calhoun for no other reason than that they were not Virginians. To him both they and Jackson were second-rate lawyers, the latter of whom he denounced as a "narrow-minded bigot." "The most dangerous man that ever sat in the Presidential chair," he said one evening to Giles, and "what's more, sir, the damned party carrying out his infernal policy will destroy the country if Virginia don't come to the rescue."

"Or Clay," said Giles, quietly.

"He's a damned humbug, sir; as great a humbug as was ever foisted on the country. Virginia, sir, is the main prop and stay of the land."

"Virginia be damned! What can it do?" demanded Giles, contemptuously, nettled at this unwarrantable attack on his favorite hero.

"Virginia! Virginia do!" exclaimed the Major, rising from his seat, astounded at this audacious remark; "Virginia is the United States, sir! let Virginia once raise her voice, sir, and Clay, Calhoun, Jackson, and the infernal politicians who support them, will be scattered to the devil, sir."

This forcible argument knocked Giles completely out of time. 'Twas too deep for him. His ideas on politics might be described as rather limited. He knew there must be two parties, one good and the other bad, and that it was the cardinal duty of every partisan to praise his party and damn the opposing one.

The Major had lost steadily every night for two weeks. Clark had won from his bank, at the various sittings, sums varying from \$50 to \$100, and had never made a losing. Giles had won about three hundred, and all the players had beaten it out of various small amounts, nightly. One evening, after the players had gone, and Giles had also departed, the Major and myself sat alone in the tailor-shop, the Major at one of the tables, consulting his memorandum-book: "Twenty-one hundred and sixty-dollars loser! pretty good losing, that, Jack, at a limit of six dollars and a quarter, and twenty-five!" said the Major, peering at me over the tops of his spectacles.

"Bad luck, Major; but it's a long lane has no turning. I hope better will come after a while," I replied, in a consoling tone.

"Not here at least," he answered, calmly.

"Why not here, Major?"

"Because I shall leave this place on the first boat for Wheeling."

"Indeed! I'm sorry to hear you say that, Major. But why do you go?"

"Because I've no more money to bank my game with, Jack."

"Well, Major, if that's what's the matter, don't go," said I, springing to my feet; "I've got a thousand dollars, and will deal it off between us." He had closed his account book, and was in the act of putting it in his breast pocket, when I made this proposition. He stopped as if suddenly petrified, and stared at me in speechless amazement. Without giving him time to recover from his astonishment, I told him that I had a sum of money, which I had won at various times at cards, that I was anxious to make more with it, and that I believed a better opportunity than the present could not be found to invest it. "If we lose the money, Major," I concluded, "I'll wait on you until you're able to pay me back your share of it, and you need have no delicacy, on the score of my age, about being interested with me, because I understand perfectly what I am about, and I don't wish it to be known that I am in any way connected with you."

"But what about Giles?" the Major finally found his tongue to ask.

"I'm my own master, Major. Giles knows nothing about my affairs whatever, and, what's more, I do not wish to have him."

"Jack, you're a generous fellow; and I'm glad to find you so well fixed, my boy! but take my advice, let gambling go to the devil. Remember, my boy, a gambler can never attain an honorable position in society. The money which you have saved will start you in some honorable business, and, if properly managed, may be the foundation of a fortune."

"Very good advice, sir, but quite thrown away on me. I've already made my election. When I made this offer to you, it was because it was for my interest to do so. There's money here, plenty of it, and I believe that faro can win it."

"That's true, my boy. But, Jack, I can't think of losing your money! That would be a cursed shame—a boy like you!"

"If you should, I should not cry about it, and should we lose the first thousand, I've got another back of that, and I'll come up with it. Should both be lost, I shan't complain, and I don't

want any one to suspect that I furnish any part of the money. You need have no scruples at all about the business, Major."

"Very well, Jack; I accept your offer, on your own terms; and if we should be unfortunate, whatever my part of the loss may be, I'll pay it to you within a month afterwards."

The following day I went to the Major's room at the "Old Hickory," and handed to him a thousand dollars. Whether his bad luck had run out, or my good fortune carried him with me, is a mystery unexplained, and by me unexplainable; but certain it is that after I had banked the Major, he closed his bank winner every night while he remained in the town. When the players began losing, the game extended much farther into the night than formerly, and sometimes did not close until daylight. We did not make a losing for ten nights, and in that time the bank won about \$3,100. Our customers were now playing on the raw material, as whatever money they had won from the Major's game they had already lost at ours, with considerable more besides; in consequence of which, several began to show signs of ill temper. Clarke particularly had, on several occasions, made himself disagreeable at the game. He had lost all his former winnings, and about \$700 more. On the tenth night after that on which the Major and myself had entered into our copartnership, when Clarke entered the room, I immediately observed he had been drinking, and apprehended we should have trouble with him. We had a full table of players, and the Major was winning every bet laid down against him. Clarke joined in the play, and lost \$200, and then demanded of the Major \$100 worth of checks, saying if he lost he would go over to the store and get the money. The Major told him politely that he made it his rule to credit no person for checks.

"I couldn't expect anything better from a low-flung blackleg running about the country swindling people out of their money," roared Clarke, rising; and seizing the chair on which he had been sitting, he dashed it with all his force against the wall, and then rushed out of the room. The Major wished to close the game, being apprehensive that he would return and display some more of his rudeness; but Giles and the rest of the players insisted that he should go on, promising that neither Clarke nor any one else should molest him further. With this assurance, the game was continued. Clarke was not absent from the room more than

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half an hour, when he returned, and flourishing in his hand a large roll of bank bills, said, "Clarke's credit ain't good for a hundred, eh? He can buy you, Mr. Jenks, and all the dirty blacklegs like you this side of h—l, can't I, Hotch, old boy?" he asked of a burly butcher, named Hotchkins, who was present. Here Giles and several others remonstrated with Clarke, telling him that if he persisted in conducting himself in this boisterous manner it would lead to the arrest of every person in the house.

"It's all right, boys," he replied; "I ain't another word to say; but I'm going to bust this d—d picayun. faro-bank;" and, drawing a chair to the table, pulled from his roll of bills a \$50 note, which he threw over to the Major and demanded checks for. He soon lost these and bought \$50 more, with which he commenced crowding the Major's limit—a piece of aggression which that gentleman would by no means tolerate. The amount of checks beyond the limit he would remove from Clarke's beta and politely hand them back to him. The latter would take them without a word, but the moment the Major's eyes were off him, down would go the checks again on the same card. The Major kept winning every bet he laid down, and in the meanwhile remonstrating and handing him his surplus checks with the remark, "Six dollars and twenty is the limit of the game, Mr. Clarke. I beg you wont crowd it." In this manner he played along at the game, holding a restraint on his tongue until he had lost \$400 from his roll of bank notes. He now began growling and cursing at his luck, and finally commenced venting his spleen again upon the Major. "Two thousand dollar loser against this d—d picayune bank, and they won't take a check over the limit. Blooded Virginians! Big gamblers! I'd hate d—d bad to meet one of 'em in an alley on a dark night." These, and similar insults, excited the Major to such a pitch that he did not know what he was doing, and, had I not prevented him, would have paid all the stand-off bets on the lay-out, and overlooked those which he had won. I requested him to get up and let me deal; he consented, and asked Giles to "look out," saying, "I want to go over to the tavern a minute." The moment I seated myself in the dealing-chair, Clarke roared out, "What the h—l are you doing there?"

"I'm going to give you some better luck, Mr. Clarke," I replied, good-humoredly.

He glared at me for a moment, seemingly in doubt whether he should drag me from the chair or not, but finally, if such was his idea, abandoned it, and, without making me any rejoinder, placed six dollars and a quarter behind the queen. It lost on the turn. He again placed the same amount in the same place. It won twice and then lost on the turn. With a terrible oath, he seized a stack of checks lying before him, of \$25 value, and threw them down in the same place. I won them in a few turns. He then took from his roll a \$50 bill and placed it on the same spot, for which I turned and won. He now laid \$50 more in the same place, and won. He let the \$100 remain and lost. The stillness was painful. Not a word was spoken in the room, and the sound of the cards, as they glided from the dealing-box, was distinctly audible. I had made up my mind to let him break himself if he could, and I had a strong conviction that such would be the case, because, on an average, such was his luck; he could not win one bet out of five. He now bet \$100 on the same spot and lost, and made three more bets of the same amount, on the same spot, and lost, making him loser on the deal \$573.50. While shuffling, preparatory to a fresh deal, a pin could have been heard distinctly had it been dropped on the floor, although there were as many as twenty persons in the room at the time. Such unusually heavy play tied the tongues of all present. Many of those in the room, no doubt, anticipated a row if Clarke lost all his money, as he seemed likely to do. I was perfectly cool, and felt as if I could win every dollar hazarded against me.

When I had placed the cards in the dealing-box, Clarke bet \$150 behind the queen. In this manner he kept on betting behind the queen, and whenever he won his bet would go the paroli, but failed to win one of them. When the Major returned he was terror-stricken at the sight of a bundle of bank notes behind the queen, and in an excited manner asked me what the amount was. "Three hundred dollars, sir," I replied. A few turns before Clarke had won \$150 and had let it remain with its product in the same place where he first laid it down.

"Why, good God, Jack, what can you mean?" he demanded. "Nothing, Major. It's all right," I replied, turning away without noticing him further.

I won the bet!

Clarke now threw down the balance of his roll in a lump. I

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did not stop to inquire the amount, but in a few turns won, and found it made Clarke a loser that night to the tune of \$2,100.

When he saw his last stake vanish from his grasp, he said not a word, but leaned back in his chair and gazed vacantly down on the lay-out, as if he could not realize his situation. The remainder of the players handed in their checks and got the money for them, and not a few immediately left the premises, fearful, no doubt, that a row would take place.

Clarke rallied himself at length, and demanded a drink of liquor, which, being given him by Giles, he swallowed it hastily; then rose from his chair, and pointing his finger towards Major Jenks, addressed that gentleman in these words:

"I want all my money back; and d—n me if I don't have it, too."

"For what reason, sir?" demanded the Major.

"Because I've been swindled out of it; ain't that reason enough?" he shouted, savagely striking the table with his fist.

"It's false, sir. You've not been swindled out of anything here," warmly replied the Major, reddening to the roots of his hair.

"You can't fool me, old man," retorted Clarke, shaking his fist in the Major's face. "You've refused over and over again to let me bet a cent over your limit! Ain't that so?"

"Certainly, sir; but what has that to do with your being swindled out of your money?" sternly demanded the Major.

"It's got a heap to do with it."

"Explain yourself, sir."

"Why the h—l did you get out of that chair when I was playing, and let that d—d cub sit there and turn for two and three hundred dollars, if you didn't *know* he was robbing me?" he fiercely asked.

"Because he wanted to show you, Mr. Clarke," said I, slowly shaking my head at him, "that this was no low-flung picayune game."

"You dirty puppy!" he cried, turning on me fiercely, "if you open your mouth again until you're spoken to I'll smash it in for you!"

"Oh, don't, Mr. Clarke," I said, laughing in his face; "that would spoil my pretty looks."

"Would it? damn you!" he screamed, reaching across the table and catching me by my hair.



I had the dealing-box in my hand, and his fingers had scarcely fastened themselves in my hair, before I dealt him a heavy blow with the sharp corner of the box, which brought his head to the table. I followed this up with a rain of heavy blows on the head, and was only stopped when I was dragged away from my prostrate foe by Giles and others. So sudden had been the attack and the repulse, that, before the bystanders could interfere, Clarke was stretched a "feless mass on the table before them. When they had washed the blood from his head, and restored him to some degree of consciousness, Giles and Rathbon, with the assistance of some others, led him over to his store, and in a few moments after the row the Major and I were left in the sole possession of the place.

"This is a bad business!" said the Major, looking pale and uneasy.

"I'm not in the least sorry about it," I replied; "he deserved more than he got!"

"Undoubtedly! but they'll arrest us, and I shall be prosecuted for gambling."

"That's true, Major, and you must not wait for them to do so. I'll get Tom Jones to take you down to Cropps' landing to-night in his fishing-boat, and you can wait there in safety until you can get aboard of a steamer going down the river."

This course being agreed upon, we commenced packing up the faro tools, when in rushed Giles, frightened out of his wits, and looking more like a ghost than his flesh and blood, and who cried out, "Jack, you've killed Clarke; he won't live till morning!"

"Good God!" shrieked the Major, "is it so bad as that?"

This unexpected news staggered me. The thought that I might have injured Clarke seriously never crossed my mind. But, young as I was, I had more presence of mind than Giles or the Major, in this emergency. "We must leave here without a moment's delay," I said to the Major. I informed Giles of my previous intention of having the Major taken to Cropps' landing, where he could wait for a boat to take him down the river; but told him I now intended to be the companion of his flight, and I asked him to assist the Major in getting his things down to Tom Jones' fishing place, while I preceded him there, to make arrangements for our flight.

"But you'll go to the house, Jack, and see the old woman, and get your clothes, won't you?" asked Giles.

"No, the clothes would only burden me, and be useless besides now, and I shall be spared the pain of breaking the terrible news to Mrs. Giles; besides, we have not one moment to lose; so hurry down to the river."

When I reached the landing, to my great joy a stern-wheel steamer was just turning the bend of the river—a sight which entirely altered my plans for flight. I resolved to take passage on her, and if she made Wheeling by the next evening, as she ought to do, to stick by her until she reached that place, and if she got stuck on a sand-bar to abandon her and take to the country, where I should seek an asylum until I heard from Giles.

I met him and the Major coming down with the luggage. They were both overjoyed at the sight of the steamer, and approved of my plan.

We got aboard of the boat as soon as she landed. "Write to me at Wheeling, care of Mr. Lane, No. 147 Main street," said the Major to Giles, as we stood together on the boiler deck of the steamer. "Direct your letter to Joshua Watkins, instead of Major George Jenks. Can you remember that, Mr. Giles?"

"Certainly I can; but why not direct the letter to you?"

"Damn it, sir, do you want to direct a letter to Major George Jenks, and set the sheriff on our tracks?"

"Oh! I see," cried Giles. "But in case I write you that Clarke's dying, what then?"

"Then rest assured that Jack and myself will get into the mountains of Virginia faster than deers, and when once there we're safe, in spite of all the sheriffs in your d—d abolition State. Giles promised to write to us every mail, and, after shaking the Major warmly by the hand, and bidding him watch over me, he turned to me and said, "Jack, if anything bad happens to you, it will kill the old woman!"

"You need not tell her of this scrape," I cried, eagerly; "make up any other story and tell her about my leaving."

"Well, you fool! Jack, don't you know that every tale-bearing b—h in the town will be carrying the news to her before the dew is off the ground?"

"Get ashore!" sung out the mate, and at the same moment the stroke of the bell told us we were getting under way.

Giles wrung me by the hand, and jumped ashore just as the clock on the court-house chimed eleven. In a few moments more we were out of sight of Marietta.

## CHAPTER X.

## PHANTOMS OF THE MEMORY.

Shortly after the steamer left Marietta I turned into my berth and slept for about two hours. In the meantime I had a horrible dream, from which I awoke in a fright, and which impressed me so vividly that to this day I distinctly remember it. In my dream I was riding on horseback over a turnpike road, which ran alongside a beautiful stream of water. As I looked at the stream I suddenly became aware of an enormous tortoise swimming along, following the direction of the road. As I looked again I perceived that the tortoise had a man's head, and, as it turned its face in the direction of mine, horror of horrors! I discovered the ghastly, blood-stained countenance of Clarke. I closed my eyes against the frightful vision and turned my head from the stream to the other side of the road, but when I once more opened my eyes and looked down, there, alongside my horse, was the tortoise, with the threatening eyes of Clarke looking at me from its face. I plunged my spurs into my horse's flanks, and on we flew with the speed of the wind, but not so swiftly but whenever I turned my eyes to either side of my horse they were met by those in the ghastly face of Clarke upon the body of the tortoise. Whether in the stream or upon the road, it showed no signs of locomotion, yet the utmost speed of my good horse was insufficient to carry me beyond it. In an agony of terror I awoke. It was some moments before I could remember where I was, but soon the disastrous events of the evening returned upon my memory in their full force. The Major was snoring with a forty-horse power in the berth beneath me, and, without disturbing him, I left my own, and sought the boiler-deck of the steamer, where I remained the rest of the night.

My dream had left such a fearful impression upon my mind, that I felt certain that Clarke was dead; and I began to feel anxious about my own safety. Fear had clutched me with its icy fingers, and I could not shake it off. My mind, during that long night, would admit no subject but the murdered Clarke. It pictured to me every possible phase of the subject—the news spread through the little town; the people talking of it in little

knots at the street-corners; the coroner's inquest and those who would be there; the verdict of the coroner's jury; the officers in pursuit of me—every incident connected with my capture and being brought back to Marietta and incarcerated in the little stone jail. Then the trial in the crowded court-room with hundreds of familiar faces staring at me. My imagination showed me every moment of the trial—the judge, the lawyers, and old Scruggs giving me “blazes” in the cracked and discordant voice I remembered to have heard so many times, trying to convince the jury that the offender before him was the greatest miscreant on the face of the earth, whom it would be a burning shame and disgrace to all good men and true to allow any longer to cumber the earth. Then would come the awful sentence of the judge, “hanged by the neck until you are dead, dead, dead!” Then the last dread scene, disclosing the gallows, the swaying multitude, the sea of up-turned faces, and myself in the place where I saw them put old man Langston for murdering his wife. Then would rush over me, like a great wave, the grief and distress of my poor foster-mother, that her boy should come to such an end. I would start from my seat at these thoughts and pace the deck in an agony.

I tried to shake off these gloomy impressions and take a more cheerful view of things, but it was useless: they returned again and again. The thought struck me that the authorities might ride to Wheeling and arrest me there on the arrival of the steamer, and, had she landed during the night, I am firmly convinced that I should have taken “French leave” of the Major, and sought the woods for safety. “’Tis the eye of childhood that fears a painted devil.”

In the gallery of the Louvre there is a picture, by Prudhon, representing a sandy defile bristling with rocks, and lighted by the full moon. Stretched naked on the sands is the corpse of a young man, while his assassin, clad in a tunic and mantle, and holding in his hand a poignard, is hurriedly making his escape. His dark, brutal-looking countenance, with its low, narrow forehead, is turned over his shoulder, as if attracted to the spot where lies his murdered victim, above whom, flying in the air, are Vengeance and Justice. The former holds a torch in one hand and with the other is in the act of seizing the murderer by the hair; beside her is Justice, armed with a sword and scales. I have

often gazed with admiration on this master-piece, but never without its bringing fresh to my mind the terrible agony I endured during the night of my flight from Marietta.

When the Major joined me in the morning, he was struck by my haggard appearance, and used all his powers of persuasion to induce me to believe I was beyond the reach of danger. He took me with him on to the hurricane-deck, where he could talk to me without being overheard, and tried his best to impress me with the belief that Clarke was not seriously injured. "Keep cool, Jack, my boy, there's not a bit of danger, not the least, sir. And if you'd killed the scoundrel on the spot you would only have served him right, damn him. The law wouldn't touch a hair of your head, sir. Damn it, what right had he to violate the person of a gentleman, sir?" At every "sir," down would come the Major's cane, with a thump on the roof of the boat, as if he intended by that means to establish his opinion more strongly in my mind. But he did not succeed in dissipating my fears, and when I expressed my apprehension of being captured at Wheeling, on the arrival of the boat at that place, and brought back to Marietta, he straightened himself up to his full height, and scornfully gazed down upon me. "Why, damn it, sir, I thought you had some spirit, but you haven't, sir. You're an infernal coward, sir; that's what you are, sir. I'm ashamed of you, sir, and I'll have nothing more to do with you." At each "sir," down came the ferule of the cane, as if he was bent on punching a hole through the roof of the boat. After telling me he should have nothing more to do with me, he flung his cane under his arm, turned on his heel, and left me in disgust. I did not blame him—I was disgusted with myself for being such a coward, but 'twas all the effect of that horrible dream. The Major had made about half a dozen steps away from me, when he turned round and ran up to me, caught me by both hands, saying, "Never mind me, my boy, I didn't mean a word of it; I only spoke so to spur you up, and make you shake off that damn scare you've got. Cheer up, Jack, and be a man, as you are. I'll never leave you, sir; no, sir, never while my name's Major George Jenks. And if that scoundrel dies, I'll take you with me into the mountains of Virginia, where you'll live like a prince, sir, and all the constables in Ohio can't take you out of it, sir. So don't be uneasy any more."

The Major had often told me about his handsome and well-

stocked farm, which he called "The Hawk's Nest," lying in one of the valleys along the Blue Ridge Mountains. According to his own tale, he was a person of some importance there. His relatives, who were all wealthy farmers, resided there, and were the most influential persons in the neighborhood. Of course I believed every word he said, and it gave me no little satisfaction to know that, in case of the worst, I should find an asylum in the mountain fastnesses of Virginia. But I never had the pleasure of beholding the lordly manor of "The Hawk's Nest," nor did I ever visit the Blue Ridge Mountains, which the Major was so fond of talking about. While I was with him in Virginia, he never once thought of visiting "The Hawk's Nest," though he frequently referred to it in conversation with me, especially when telling me of the number and quality of his racing colts, which he was intending to bring on the turf in a few years. Before our flight I had discovered that he was rather hyperbolic, but I never believed him to be a Munchausenist until after our arrival in Richmond. One day, while taking a stroll with one of his most intimate friends, I incidentally mentioned the glowing description the Major gave of his farm in the Blue Ridge, and of how important a personage he was in his neighborhood. My companion shook his head and laughed heartily. "Why?" I exclaimed, much surprised, "you don't mean to say he's been stuffing me? What could be his object in doing so?"

"None in the world," he replied, laughing good-humoredly. "You can't find a more honest man than the Major, or one more kind-hearted; but pomposity is his weakness. He's told that story so often about his farm, that he's really got to believe it himself."

"And do you mean to say he's got no farm?"

"I don't believe he owns a foot of ground on earth!"

"And what about those rich relations of his?" I asked.

"He has got two brothers living on small patches of ground somewhere in the Blue Ridge; but they wouldn't have hog and hominy enough to keep the hide on themselves and their children, if the Major did not give them some assistance now and then."

"You astonish me," I replied. "I knew the old fellow was visionary; but I never knew before that he was such a confounded liar."

"Don't let him know that you're any wiser on these points than he wishes you to be, or he'll take the sulks and leave you."

I promised to obey his instructions, and we parted.

## CHAPTER XI.

## WHEELING.

It was late in the evening when we reached Wheeling, and, to my great joy, I was not pursued and arrested, as I had gloomily anticipated, on the landing of the steamer.

The Major took me with him to the residence of his friend, Mr. Lane, in whose charge he left me, and proceeded to the "United States Hotel," which was a few steps from the landing, and to which he had ordered his luggage to be carried.

Mr. Richard Lane, in whose house I found an asylum, was the only son of a highly respectable merchant of Wheeling. His mother dying during his infancy, young Dick was brought up under the care of his remaining parent, who did not marry again until he was eighteen years of age, at which time he was sent to the University of Virginia, to be made acquainted with the subtle intricacies of the law.

While there, young Lane paid full as much attention to the mysteries attached to a pack of cards as to unraveling the knotty points of Coke or Blackstone. Money being requisite in both these pursuits, the pockets of the elder Lane were doubly taxed, in order to meet the demands caused by the profligacies of his son. At first he paid grudgingly; but when he saw broken the repeated promises of reformation made by his son, he buttoned up his pockets and abandoned him to his fate. Young Lane continued to live along on his wits, and by borrowing on his own promises to pay and drafts drawn upon his father, both of which were dishonored, when, for some more outrageous piece of rascality than usual, he was expelled from his college, and his father, no less cruel than his preceptors, forbade his return home after such disgrace. Young Dick made his way to Richmond, where he divided his time between such of the gambling-rooms as he could gain an entrance to. He did his best in the borrowing line, playing at games and short cards, in which manner about three years more of his life passed. About this time an old gambler by the name of Brooks, living in Richmond, took a fancy to Dick, and made him a faro-dealer. It was here that Lane and Major Jenks became acquainted, both being concerned in the same gambling-

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house during the space of a year, and in which time they had realized a clean profit of twenty-two thousand dollars. Lane had shaken off his dissipated habits by this time, and had paid all his debts. A few years later his father died, without ever being reconciled to his son; but, dying intestate, his only child, of course, fell heir to his property. He returned to Wheeling after an absence of seven years, to find, to his chagrin and disappointment, that a single house valued at ten thousand dollars, and debts amounting to four thousand dollars, were all that remained. Lane paid the debts and took possession of the house, and about six months later married his wife, stealing her away from her parents, who were bitterly opposed to him, and taking her to Richmond. Mrs. Lane was the offspring of one of the first families of Wheeling—not the first families of Virginia, none of that rather equivocal stock having gotten as far west as Wheeling. From where did it derive its existence? From those emigrants who landed from the three ships in the Chesapeake Bay, in the year of our Lord 1607! If so, that party being composed entirely of the male gender, the weaker vessels necessarily must have been taken from among the Indian women, which might have a tendency to adulterate the pure Anglo-Norman blood. Forty years later we find existing in Virginia a small oligarchy composed of the principal landholders, who tried to rule the colony by right of property or by "right divine," as all tyrannical bodies of men have ruled from time immemorial. Possibly from this oligarchy sprang originally the F. F. V.'s. But a good part of these colonists having "left their country for their country's good," in consequence of an inability to distinguish "mine" from "thine," or some such little innocent idiosyncrasy, which the cruel and tyrannical laws of Great Britain at that time punished by sending them out to Virginia, to be sold as slaves for various periods, according to the enormity of their offenses, it is presumable that some of these unfortunate individuals, at the expiration of their sentences, being purged, according to law, of the stains of dishonor, and restored to the rights of citizenship, would have worked out for themselves a brighter future; and that, in course of time, their offspring, having obtained a respectable property position in society, would come to be considered worthy consorts for the daughters of the wealthy land-owners. By these means it is plausible to suppose that the "blue blood," which is believed to



have formerly coursed through the veins of the first families of Virginia, has been adulterated, so far, at least, as to bring back its color to the reddish hue of that which runs in the veins of ordinary mortals. Such being the case, it's very possible that not a drop of the "cl'ar grit" can be found at the present time in the Old Dominion.

The parents of Mrs. Lane belonged to the moneyocracy; and families of that stamp, proud, arrogant, and conceited, may be found in every one-horse town and village, as well as every densely populated city in the world; consequently no one need be surprised that they resolutely shut their doors in her face for having the audacity to marry a gambler, and a poor one at that; a rich gambler might have been tolerated, but to throw herself away on a poor one was unpardonable.

Lane and his wife, after an absence of about a year, during which time they had lived in Richmond, returned to Wheeling, in the hopes that her parents would relent and take them under their fostering wing. But as well might the young Alexis Petrowich have tried to move the icy heart of his father, Peter the Great, when he had decoyed him from Naples to Moscow, in order to put him to death. Lane, finding that his wife's parents still continued obdurate, was for disposing of what property he had there and returning to Richmond; but his wife, who had inherited some of the stubborn nature of her parents, having learned that her presence in the place was an eye-sore to them, and they desired nothing so much as her absence, like an undutiful child, she refused to budge an inch, thereby keeping her husband in a place where it was impossible for him to make a living by the exercise of his profession. By renting the lower part of their house for a store, it being situated on a main business street, they eked out a kind of a respectable living.

When I was introduced to Mr. Lane he was about thirty years of age, remarkably handsome, both in face and figure. He conversed with ease and fluency, was witty and intelligent, and had the manners and habits of a gentleman, besides being a tender husband and devoted to his children, of whom he had two, a boy and a girl. He possessed both energy and ability, and was capable of making friends wherever he went; but fashionable society could not countenance him, because he was tainted with the damned spot of the professional gambler. Mrs. Lane was a

strong, healthy woman, and if nature had denied her beauty, it had endowed her with nobler gifts—cheerfulness and intelligence. During the few days I was in hiding at her house, she tried to make my situation as easy and comfortable as possible, without once trying to pry into the circumstances of the case, or my history—a thing many persons might have presumed on doing, on account of my youth. That I was the protégé of Major Jenks was sufficient for herself and husband; and I was confident that while under their roof I should have nothing to fear from being treacherously given up to the officers of the law.

Lane's presence in Wheeling was barely tolerated by the officers of the law, who were of the puritanical order, and who carried out their policy with the seeming intention of making the present generation, if not the next one, remember their intolerant spirit. The Maine liquor law became an established fact in the place, billiard and bagatelle tables were prohibited, and also bowling-alleys. Such individuals as indulged in their leisure hours at cock-fights, dog-fights, or bull-baits, or any other display of the manly art, were mulcted in heavy fines. Whenever the patrons of these sports desired to amuse themselves they were obliged to seek the fields of some adjoining county, or cross into the more liberal State of Ohio. Faro-dealers had given the place a wide berth within the last few years, previous to our arrival in the place, and well might they, if they had gathered any wisdom from the way in which the fraternity had been treated there. Several had from time to time the temerity to come within the sacred precincts of the city, and, after prospecting it, to open their banks. They were allowed to proceed for a time, to give them confidence, when they were suddenly pounced upon by the officers of the law, and with all their players taken to the lock-up. The latter were usually released the same night, or next morning, on payment of a fine of twenty-five dollars, besides having the felicity of seeing their names in full in the newspapers among the "list of gamblers captured last night by our 'Argus-eyed' police." The owners of the bank were accommodated with private lodgings in the brick jail, from the barred windows of which they could solace themselves with a sight of the beautiful foliage of the papaw bushes, which adorned the hill back of their prison, and meditate on the conflicting opinions of mankind, and the arrogant pride of some of

that species in forcing the result of their opinions upon whoever had the misfortune to disagree with them, while "dressed in a little brief authority." After a few days' incarceration they were released, but not until they were leeches out of their last dollar, and then compelled to leave the city within a few hours. Should they refuse to accept their liberty on such hard terms, they must either procure bail, or remain in jail till the court sat, which was once in six months, when certain conviction, with a \$1,000 fine and imprisonment for one year in the county jail would be their doom. Of the two evils the former was the least, and such faro-dealers as were arrested in the place chose it, and gave to the officers their last dollar to escape their clutches. This plunder was divided between the Mayor of the city, the Marshal, and the District Attorney. Over every foot of soil belonging to the State of Virginia the punishment for dealing a banking game of faro was a fine of \$1,000 and imprisonment for one year in the county jail; but the law had fallen into disuse except in Wheeling, where it was enforced by a few rascally officials, for the benefit of their own pockets.

Lane was the only person who had ever had the hardihood not to be fleeced of his money, when arrested for dealing faro. Being a citizen, and having many influential friends in the place, he imagined that if he opened a faro-bank he would be exempt both from prosecution and persecution, so he tried it on. This happened about eighteen months before our arrival. Lane was allowed to proceed for a time, and then was suddenly arrested, with all his players. He furnished the necessary bail, stood his trial, was convicted, and, according to statute, sentenced to pay a fine of one thousand dollars, and be imprisoned for one year. Through the influence of his friends in Richmond, however, he was pardoned by the Governor, about two weeks after the passing of his sentence, to the immense disgust of the puritans of Wheeling. He never again tempted fortune by opening a faro-bank there, although he told us the present Marshal was friendly to him, and had said he might open one if he wished, provided he conducted it very quietly.

On the second day, the anxiously expected letter from Giles arrived, and, to my unbounded joy, Clarke was not dead, "nor is he going to make a die of it," wrote Giles. "But that lick you gave him over the eye with the dealing-box has branded

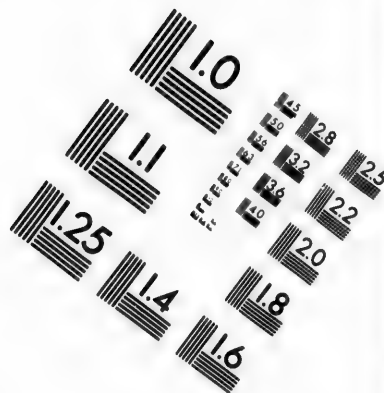
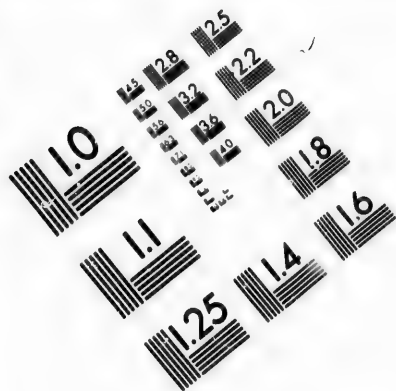
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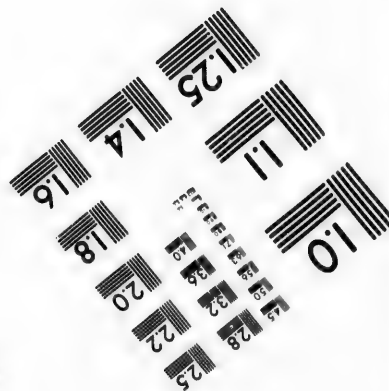
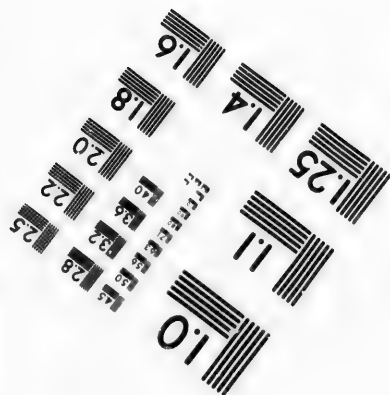
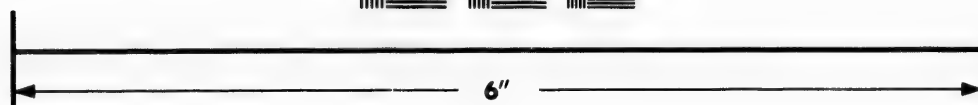
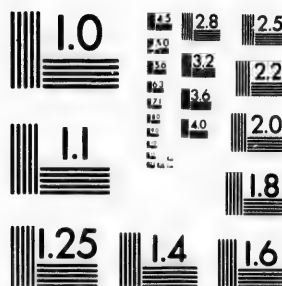
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# IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (MT-3)



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him with the mark of the tiger, and he'll carry it to his grave with him." He then went on to state that nearly all of those who were in the room, when the row occurred, left town that night or the next morning, being afraid they might, if they staid, be brought up as witnesses; but it was unnecessary, for the whole affair had been kept so silent that the saints in power had received no inkling of it, up to the time of his writing. He further stated that Clarke advised his friends to keep the whole affair under cover, but that he threatened to kill me when he recovered. Giles therefore advised us not to return to Marietta until he could come to some friendly understanding with him. His admonition was entirely unnecessary. Nothing but force would have induced the Major to return, and as for myself, with more than five thousand dollars in my pocket, and an anxiety to see strange climes and faces, I certainly was not likely to do so, all things considered. Clarke's threat would have withheld me, if nothing else; not that I feared him especially, and I was certainly overjoyed to know I had not killed him, but it would have been foolish for me to have returned where my presence was certain to bring perplexity and trouble to those who loved me.

On the day following the reception of Giles' letter, Lane told the Major and myself that he had had an interview with the City Marshal, and that he was willing to permit us to open and conduct a faro-bank in the place, provided we gave to him one hundred dollars, and five per cent. of whatever we won. In consideration of which we should not be molested by him, and in case any complaint was made against us, or any movements of any kind that would endanger our safety on foot, that he would give us timely warning. Lane advised us to accept the terms, promising, if we did so, to bring to us a valuable moneyed play, and would also furnish the money to take a third interest in the game. The Major was pleased with the proposal, "because," said he, "after taking our money he won't betray us, and the prospect of making more will induce him to protect us." So we agreed to try our fortune in Wheeling, and lost no time in looking out for a suitable place to set up our bank.

"My room at the hotel is just the thing," said the Major, bringing down his open palm smartly upon his knee.

"That's so," returned Lane, "and old Griffiths, the landlord, is



just the man we want to do ousiness with; he'd walk a mile of a rainy night, any time, to get a chance to play against faro; besides, he'll bring every one with him that's worth having, so I'll go down and sound the old cock."

Mr. Griffiths, the proprietor of the "United States Hotel," was a good-natured, jovial kind of soul; he was fond of his tod-dies, always ready to attend a cock-fight or a horse-race, or to play a stack of white checks against a faro-bank, or even to amuse himself at a small game of poker. But to allow a faro-bank to be conducted in his own house, the fine for such a little delinquency being five hundred dollars, was more than the old gentleman could stomach.

"But don't I tell you I've got the Marshal all right?" argued Lane, in plea of his suit.

"Have you, though?" exclaimed mine host of the "United States;" "and I tell you I know Jerry Clemmens, the Marshal, as you call him, a damn sight better than you do. He's a thief, Mr. Lane, and all them fellers connected with him are a set of thieves, the whole kit and bilin' of 'em, as you'll find out to your sorrow, if you trust any on 'em!"

Facing the upper end of the steamboat landing, and built against the steep bank of the river, was a small three-story brick house. The ground floor of this building was occupied as a grocery store. The second story, which was unoccupied, had in front a wooden balustrade, from which a rickety stairway descended to the street. The top story was entered by a single door, from the back street, which wound from the landing to the top of the hill, against which the house was built, and soon after lost itself in the main street of the city. When seen from the rear, it seemed merely a one-story brick house. This top room was occupied by a drunken tailor, by the name of Morse, who was, at one time, owner of the best tailoring establishment in Wheeling; but love of liquor had brought him so low that his former patrons dared not trust him with cloth sufficient to make a pair of pantaloons, for fear he would sell it for whiskey. He managed to live by working during the day at any stray jobs of mending old clothes, and from what he could collect from small poker parties, who met by stealth in his room at night. He would generally keep sober until he had accumulated twenty or thirty dollars, when he would start on a spree, and keep it up as long as he had a cent or could run his face for a dram.

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It was from this worthy gentleman, then, that we received permission to set up our game in his house. He was just getting off one of his customary sprees, flat broke, and glad of the opportunity to make another raise by renting his room to us for two dollars a night. Lane, to quiet any fears he might entertain of being punished for allowing us to deal faro in his room, told him, with a significant wink, that there was no danger to be apprehended from the authorities, as he'd fixed them all right.

"Clemmens, you mean, I know," said Morse, with a shake of the head. Look out for him, Mr. Lane; he's as slippery as an eel; I ain't afeard o' his botherin' me, cos he can't make nothin' outer me, but he won't do, that's flat," said Mr. Morse, with another ominous shake of his head. "Rec'lect, Mr. Lane," he continued, "your friends here is strangers, an' are got money, an' them there robbers will go for it as quick as a bass will go for a minnow, if you give 'em half a chance."

"Don't let that bother your head, old fellow; I've arranged all that," said Lane.

"May be," returned Mr. Morse, "but there's no harm, Mr. Lane, in just shutting the gate. Look there," he said, pointing with his finger towards a corner of the floor; "make a trap door, and a pair of stairs down into the room below; there ain't nobody livin' there, and from them there balcony stairs you can make tracks towards the levee, if them peelers took it into their heads to break in on ye some fine night when there was a lot here a fightin' the tiger."

"By the Lord!" exclaimed the Major, jumping to his feet, "you're the only sensible man among us, and your advice, sir, is too good to be thrown away."

Lane procured a carpenter on whose secrecy he could rely; he made the trap and stairs at his shop, and fitted them to their place, during the night. This part of our arrangements we kept to ourselves, not deeming it wise to admit our customers into the secret. Lane had a dealing-table, which we transferred from his residence to the room, also during the night, and, with the assistance of some chairs, candlesticks, and other requisite articles, we were ready to receive customers. Lane commenced mustering his players, but they fought very shy for the first two or three nights. Lane would bring them in and introduce them,

and the Major would show his hospitality by showing before them a bottle and glasses, or porter, if they preferred it, but no sooner had they swallowed their beverage than they would retire precipitately, as if they were afraid the claws of the police would seize upon them before they could reach the street. Lane's repeated assurances that there was nothing to fear, as he had the Marshal all right, finally began to have its weight. The third evening of our venture, two gentlemen having the fear of the law less before their eyes than their companions, bought twenty dollars' worth of checks, and with them tackled the "tiger." They lost, and almost immediately left the room. They came again on the following evening, and tried their luck, which gave confidence to others. From that night the number of our players gradually increased; even the jovial landlord of the "United States" so far overcame his fears as to lend us the light of his countenance, which was a host in our favor, because every player in the place, whose custom was worth having, would follow where old John Griffiths led. Finally our room was filled every night, with from fifteen to twenty players, all business men, merchants, stage-agents, steamboat-captains, and the like, who all had plenty of money, which they bet liberally against the game. The Major and myself dealt, and frequently did not make acquaintance with our beds before daylight. Lane introduced the customers to the game, besides keeping himself in the good graces of the Marshal, on whom he was careful to make a quiet call, every morning, and report proceedings. Every precaution had been taken to keep our business as secret as possible. Not a light could be seen in our room from the street. Morse was on duty in the street, with a key, that none might gain admittance but our known customers, and having a suspicion, notwithstanding the Marshal's assurance to Lane, that the Wheeling authorities might not share Mr. Pitt's opinion, that "the hut of the peasant should be as secure from official intrusion as the palace of the king," we had caused a strong oaken bar, held by two heavy iron staples firmly fastened into the door-posts, to be put up. We had also arranged with our worthy sentinel, Morse, that in case a descent was made upon us, he should give timely warning, in order that we might make our escape by the trap-door. The signal agreed upon was that he should sing out, loud enough for us to hear, "Whose corn-patch

by shoving before preferred it, but no than they would reach the street. claws of the police to have its weight. nothing to fear, as he to have its weight. gentlemen having the n their companions, d with them tackled iately left the room. and tried their luck, at night the number jovial landlord of the s to lend us the light favor, because every h having, would fol- y our room was filled players, all business captains, and the like, bet liberally against t, and frequently did fore daylight. Lane besides keeping himself hom he was careful to l report proceedings. keep our business as seen in our room from t, with a key, that none customers, and having s assurance to Lanc, hare Mr. Pitt's opinion, secure from official in- caused a strong oaken fastened into the door- anged with our worthy was made upon us, he we might make our es- ceed upon was that he ar, "Whose corn-patch

is to be robbed now?" This luminous idea emanated from the prolific brain of the Major, who contended it was an unusual expression, and less likely to create a misunderstanding than another. For more than two weeks our game continued without any impediment, during which time it won about \$2,300. But everything is uncertain in this world, except death, rent-day, and board-bills. On the eighteenth night, our gambling career in Wheeling was brought to an abrupt close.

"Twas the 'witching hour of night, when churchyards yawn," etc., and our players were about \$500 ahead of the bank, the first successful assault they had made upon it since we had opened. Their good fortune rendered them good-natured, and the four dozen of ale and porter, together with a gallon of brandy, which they had hidden away behind their shirts, began to make them feel comfortable and happy. Among them was a big burly red-headed Irishman named Dougherty, the only loser in the party. He was interested in a wholesale liquor store in the place. His excitable temperament would not allow him to sit in a chair while at play, like any one else, but kept him continually walking about the room, now and then reaching over the heads of the other players to place a bet on the lay-out, or pick one up from it. Whenever his checks gave out, and he discovered a card which he thought a winner, he would sing out to me, "Howld where ye're, Jack, a bit, till I bate the bank;" then he would bid me put "tin dollars in ivory" on his chosen card, "an' if I lose them, me boy, sure I've the money in me fist to pay yez," at the same time displaying a gold eagle in his fingers. Whether from the closeness of the room, the liquor he had drank, or his losing rather heavily against the bank, the perspiration rolled in streams from his face, and between watching his bets and swabbing himself with a red bandana handkerchief, he had quite enough to keep him pretty well employed. "Howld there, Jack, till I bate ye's." "Yes sir, what can I do for Mr. Dougherty?" "Ye'll put tin dollars in ivory beyant the blagard king; it's bate me three times, he has, hand runnin', bad luck till his dirty carcass." I placed the ten dollars' worth of checks as he had desired, when he said, "By your lave, master Jack, them checks will engraft themselves on the black sivin, and if there isn't a black sivin in the box, the devil other one it'll take; do ye mind that, master Jack?" "All right, Mr.

Dougherty," had no sooner passed my lips, than the shrill voice of Morse was heard, singing out, "Whose corn-patch is to be robbed now?"

"By the Eternal!" exclaimed the Major, "they're going to break in upon us."

"What's the matter? Anything wrong? What's up?" queried several of the players at once.

"The authorities are at the door, gentlemen," whispered the Major.

All was now confusion and dismay. Some of the players demanded money for their checks, while some stuck theirs in their pockets, as they rose frightened from their seats. I conveyed what money was in the card-box to my breast-pocket, and had barely done so when all the lights were extinguished, by whom, I do not to this day know, but evidently by some of the players. We now heard a short scuffle at the door, and the raised voice of Morse crying, "This is my house, and you can't get into it." A moment's stillness was broken by a smart rapping on the door with a stick, and a stern voice demanding it to be opened in the name of the law. "It's the Mayor," whispered one of the players. No response being made to this demand, the same voice called out in a louder key, "If you don't open the door, I'll burst it open." "Begorra, ye'd bettther not, if ye're wise," shouted Dougherty. A heavy surge against the door was the only response, followed by another, which shook the old tenement so that for a moment I thought it was about to tumble into the river. The strong oaken bar, before mentioned, kept the door from being broken, but it was evident it would not stand much further pressure. I had by this time gathered up the faro tools, and, with the assistance of the Major, had placed them in the valise. I then whispered in his ear, "The trap-door! be quick!" He squeezed my arm, and I moved forward, or rather groped my way, the Major holding by my arm till we reached the desired spot. I brushed from it the rubbish of old clothing belonging to Morse, under which it was hidden, and raised the trap. I made the Major descend first, and passed him the valise; I then made the best of my way down myself. I had scarcely placed my foot upon the second step of the narrow staircase, when the powerful voice of Dougherty sounded on my ear, calling to those battering at the door, in stentorian tones,

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"If ye's break down that dure, I'll murder ivery mother's son o' ye's." They heeded him not, but with renewed energy, as it seemed, continued surging against it with their united strength, the door now evidently showing signs of giving way. "Let's fight the d—d sons of b—s," cried a voice which I recognized as belonging to an agent for one of the stage lines. "What the devil else would we do but fight 'em, blood an' ouns yes, and bate 'em too," responded Dougherty. His voice seemed to have the effect of a slogan; every one of the besieged appeared to respond to it. The rattling of the bottles piled near the door informed me that they were preparing to give their assailants a warm reception. They had barely time to seize them, when the door came in with a crash, carrying with it two of its besiegers. These escaped the worse fate of many of their companions, who were received with such a volley of bottles as sent numbers of them "to grass," not to "come up to time" again that night, either. The defenders of the citadel charged upon such of the assailants as remained, after they had expended their bottles, with such force and energy that the Mayor and his satellites were all ignominiously routed, or placed "*hors du combat*." While watching the short struggle by the dim light which shone in through the broken-down door, I lost all sense of my situation. I listened to the powerful voice of Dougherty cheering on his friends, and could see his burly form as he "waded into" his foes, knocking them right and left. The attack was so sudden and unexpected, that the Mayor and his party were whipped before they had time to make hardly a show of resistance. The Major had made his way to the balcony, which overlooked the river, where he waited for a few moments, expecting momentarily that I would join him. All this time I had been standing on the second step of the staircase, but was now brought to my senses by the Major's grip on my arm, and his voice in my ear saying, "What the h—l is keeping you?" and made conscious that I was loitering away time, which was precious. In a few moments we were both standing on the levee, where Morse came to us. During the row, he had escaped from his captors, and knowing we would make our exit by the trap-door, had come to meet us. He hurried us along up the bank of the river about four hundred yards, to a small cabin, where the ferryman slept. Morse roused him, and, after explaining our wants,

the ferryman agreed to put us across the river in a skiff for a dollar.

"You'd better come with us, Morse," I whispered, so the ferryman should not hear. "Why?" he asked.

"Won't they put you in jail, if they catch you?"

"Not they," said he, laughing. "Want me? No, indeed! Them thieves want money, and they know I ain't got any. They want you and the old man here, that's what they want, and my best advice to you is to get across that there river in double-quick, and don't stop, neither, short o' Bridgeport, 'cause if they find out which road you've took, they'll be arter you like a thousand o' brick.

We had been paying him his rent nightly; consequently we owed him but for the present night. I gave him three ten dollar gold pieces, which he received with many thanks, and after the Major had told him to inform Lane that we should expect to see him at the hotel at Bridgeport, as soon as he could make it convenient on the morrow, he shook us warmly by the hand and left us.

When the ferryman had set us on the island, as agreed upon, we had to walk about a mile in order to reach the ferry on the opposite side, and also carry the valise containing the faro-tools, which got pretty heavy before we reached the end of it. During our tramp across the island, I tried several times to draw the Major into conversation, with but scant success. Our night's adventures, with the tramp for the finale, had completely exhausted him. When we finally reached the opposite side, we spent what remaining strength we had, bawling for the ferryman to come and take us over. His boat was on the opposite shore, and he, no doubt, snug in bed and fast asleep, for no one came to our relief. It was now near three o'clock, and we had no choice but to remain where we were until daybreak. The Major apparently took matters very coolly, for I could not get a word out of him, which at that time made his companionship anything but agreeable. I finally succeeded in forcing a little animation into him by making an onslaught on the inhabitants of his native State. "Nice way this, Major, your high-toned Virginians have of treating faro-dealers."

"Damn it, sir, don't call them infernal thieves over there, Virginians. Virginians are gentlemen, and know how to treat strangers with courtesy, sir!"

"Well, Major, if Wheeling isn't in Virginia, I'll have to travel over my geography again."

"Pan-handle, sir! Virginians have never acknowledged the damned abolition dog-hole as any part of their State, and I wish an earthquake would swallow the cursed place up, and not leave a vestige of the infernal race of rattlesnakes that inhabit it, to show that it ever existed." With this volley went what strength remained after the fatigues and vexations of the night, and the copious drinks of liquor he had imbibed, and, too tired even to swear, the irate Major stretched himself on the grass, with his head resting on his valise, and balmy sleep soon relieved him from his present troubles.

Not so with me. For nearly three weary hours did I pace backward and forward along the banks of the river, breaking the monotony, at times, by stopping to pitch a stone into it, or pausing in my sentinel stride to listen intently whenever any of the thousand and one "voices of the night" made me imagine I could hear the footsteps or voices of men, or the clattering hoof of the horses of our pursuers. It was long after daybreak when the ferry-boat at last took us over to Bridgeport, a small place, containing about thirty houses, and among them a small tavern, where we got some breakfast, and afterwards beds, into which we tumbled, and slept till two o'clock in the day. Lane arrived about two hours later, and from him we learned that no arrests had been made, up to the time when he left Wheeling. "Nor," he continued, "do I believe there will be any; the Mayor, nor any of his party, were able to recognize a single one of your players, and I understand the Mayor is laid up from a smash of a bottle he got over the eyes, and many others are dreadfully cut up. The affair was creating considerable amusement in Wheeling, at the expense of the authorities," who, he added, "have few sympathizers, the verdict of almost every one being, 'Served them exactly right.'" The first intimation I had of the row, was being knocked up out of my sleep, by Morse, who told me of the fight, and your escape; I was afraid to venture near the room, lest some of the police might be prowling near the spot, and grab me. So I gave Morse a bed, and waited till I had daylight for it, then went down to the room. There wasn't a soul there, nor near there. The door was smashed in, and broken bottles, chairs, and candlesticks, together with other



debris, were scattered in confusion about the place, showing plainly that some hot work had taken place there. I set up the broken door and closed the trap, which you had left open, and went home again. After breakfast, I made it my first business to call upon the Marshal, at his house, and demand an explanation. He pretended to be much astonished, and declared this was the very first he had heard of it. He went on to state that the evening before, business had called him to Wellsburg (a place about eight miles above, on the river), where he was unexpectedly detained, and did not arrive at home until two o'clock in the morning. He then asked me to come back at noon, saying by that time he should have succeeded in getting all the particulars relating to the affair, and would let me know all about it; at the same time expressing great concern, and asking me where you were. I told him I didn't know, and I waited anxiously enough for noon to come, because I did not want to come over here until I could bring you all the news I could collect in relation to the matter. In the meantime I saw old Griffiths, and some others of our customers, and have ascertained that none of them are hurt; nor do they feel the least uneasy regarding the affair. Griffiths said several had checks, which must be redeemed, and I told him to get them all together, and I would pay him the money for them. He promised to do so."

"That's right," said the Major.

"At twelve, precisely," continued Lane, "I was again at the Marshal's house. He pretended to be in a great rage with the Mayor, who, he told me, had purposely sent him to Wellsburg, on a trumped-up errand, that he might get a chance to arrest you in his absence. 'But I'll get even with him for interfering with my duty, the old villain,' fumed Clemmens, shaking his fist. 'I'm damn glad he's got licked, instead of grabbing your friends, that I am, Mr. Lane. But he's a mighty bitter old fellow, a bitter pill, when he gets started, I tell you; so tell your friends to fight shy for a few days till this business blows over, and he won't love you any better for it; so keep your eye skinned for him, Mr. Lane.' I thanked him for his advice," said Lane, "but told him I had no idea where you were, but if I found out, should not fail to post you up. After skirmishing around some time longer, he inquired how much the game had won. I told him, but he knew almost as well as myself; he was always asking me the same question,

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every time we met. He then demanded his five per cent. I told him you had the money, and were gone. 'That's got nothing to do with me; I look to you, Lane, for my money,' he replied. 'If that's the case,' I rejoined, 'you'll look for what you won't find; for I tell you plainly that I won't give you a cent. You have no right to it; you did not protect my friends as you promised.' 'I did, as long as I could, Mr. Lane, and you're not going to cheat me out of my money,' he cried, in his most domineering manner. 'Not a cent will you get from me,' I replied, 'no, not if 'twas to save your life, Mr. Clemmens; because I believe this whole affair was a put-up job between you and the Mayor, to rob my friends.'

"You say that to cover your own rascality with me; but you give me my money," he cried, shaking his finger in my face, "or I'll make this town so damned hot for you, that 'twont hold you."

"You should have killed the damn scoundrel on the spot," said the Major, excitedly.

"I don't think, Major," said Lane, smiling, "that that would have improved matters much, in my case, but I think I did better: I just told him, point blank, that I didn't believe a word of his Wellsburg story, neither did I believe the Mayor would have dared to make a descent on us, without his knowledge and consent—that I was satisfied that 'twas all a put-up job. 'Now, Mr. Clemmens,' I said, 'you've been good enough to say you'll make this town too hot to hold me. I'm glad you've warned me; I'll do the same little favor for you. When the grand jury meets the first of next month, I'll go before it and swear that I gave you one hundred dollars as a bribe, to allow a faro bank to be played in the place.'

"You had him there, Lane, where his hair was short," said the Major.

"He thought so himself, I reckon," replied Lane, "for he wilted immediately, and insisted that he didn't mean anything when he said he'd make the town too hot for me, and swore to me black and blue that my suspicion of his having any knowledge of the Mayor's intentions to arrest you was all wrong, and finally promised to have the whole thing hushed up, and asked me to come and see him again to-night or in the morning."

"Morse always said he was a thief, and would betray us when-  
ever it was for his interest to do so, and he spoke like a prophet,"  
said the Major.

"He deceived me," said Lane; "I see it all now. He was afraid you'd be missing some fine morning, knowing that's what he'd do himself, and the temptation to rob you while he could was too much for him. You had too much money, 'that's what's the matter,' so he just put up the job that the Mayor should arrest you, while he kept out of the way, to blind me. They thought they could squeeze ten or fifteen hundred dollars out of you, at least—a big prize for them."

"By the Eternal! they caught the prize; but 'twas a Scotch one," laughed the Major; "but you must hunt up our friends and redeem their checks—I'll give you the money to do so—and bring over our baggage from the hotel, and settle our bills. Do it to-day, because I want to leave this place to-morrow." Then a new crouch seized the Major's brain. Overjoyed at the result of our intended capture, he wanted Lane to invite all our players to come over, and he would give them a dinner. He ordered him to bring a couple of gallons of the best brandy he could find, together with two baskets of champagne. "Bring old Griffiths; he's a full team, by the Lord! and don't forget Dougherty, Lane; he's the only Irishman I ever liked; and we'll make a jolly night of it, for I'm in the humor, and feel like a young colt."

But Lane, after much argument, dissuaded the Major from his hospitable intentions, representing to him their impropriety. "Those gentlemen, Major, don't want to come all the way over here to eat a dinner at a one-horse country tavern, where they can get nothing fit to eat anyhow; and besides, consider, they want, of course, to keep as quiet as possible just now, in consequence of this affair. If they are not already known to the authorities, their coming over here to feast with you would spot every one of them out at once, because Clemmens and the rest would be sure to hear of it. Never mind the dinner; save your money, Major; you'll feel all the better after it to-morrow morning. There's a boat expected down in the morning, and I'll have your luggage over in good time, and my team to take you to Bellaire, where you can get aboard of her." The Major reluctantly yielded to the advice of Lane, who shortly left us for the night.

On the following day, a little after noon, Lane made his appearance in a carriage, bringing our baggage; we entered it and were driven to Bellaire, a town about four miles further down the river. The expected steamer had not been heard from when

it all now. He was knowing that's what b you while he could money, 'that's what's the Mayor should ar- and me. They thought dollars out of you, at

; but 'twas a Scotch unt up our friends and ey to do so—and bring e our bills. Do it to- morrow." Then a new eyed at the result of our vite all our players to ner. He ordered him brandy he could find, "Bring old Griffiths; rget Dougherty, Lane; ve'll make a jolly night young colt."

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oon, Lane made his ap- gage; we entered it and four miles further down ot been heard from when

Lane left Wheeling. From him we learned the important facts that Morse was on a spree and that no arrests had been made of parties engaged in our affair, nor were any likely to be made. The Marshal had said there would be none, and had apologized for his rough language to Lane.

"Look out for him, Mr. Lane," I said; "he's only waiting to get a good tight grip on you."

"I've nothing to fear from him, Jack, and if he ever fools me again 'tis my own fault. However, I'm going to leave the place; I'm going to Richmond to live."

"That's the talk!" cried the Major. "I'm glad to see you've got some wisdom at last. But when are you going to start? Will you take your family with you?"

"Yes, sir, I shall; and all that now detains me is some business matters, which it will take about a month to arrange satisfactorily; then I'm off for Richmond."

"I'm glad to hear you say so—that's the place!" cried the Major, enthusiastically, "the paradise of the world! The only spot on earth fit for a gentleman to live in! and when I meet you there, sir, I'll extend the right hand of fellowship to you, sir, as I've always done!"

"Thank you, Major; shall I see Jack there with you?"

"Certainly, sir! Why do you ask such a foolish question? Jack leave his guide, companion, tutor, friend? No, sir; we're going to open a gambling-house in Richmond, and shall expect you to drop in upon us when you arrive."

Lane promised to do so. He remained with us till near sun- down, when the anxiously expected boat having put in an appear- ance, we took our farewell of him and got on board. Early the next morning the steamer touched at Marietta; but the Major and myself confined ourselves strictly to our berths, until she had started again on her journey. In the evening we reached Pa- kersburg, where we landed, and took up our quarters at the only hotel in the place for the night.

## CHAPTER XII.

## "ON TO RICHMOND."

Richmond, a name made famous forever, when the Welsh Earl who bore it plucked the crown of England from the head of the tyrant Richard on Bosworth Field. How revered has that name been by Englishmen; with it they have christened towns, streets, terraces, ships, villas, and palaces; and then, as if afraid that some fearful calamity might destroy every vestige of it in their own beautiful isle, they transplanted it to the new world just waking into life, and bestowed it on that spot on the James River, which, for more than two hundred years, was the headquarters of a barbarous and disgraceful traffic—the illustrious mart of slavery; the Mecca of slave-dealers; the stronghold of the Confederacy; renowned for one of the most remarkable sieges in the annals of butchery.

"Mr. President, will you favor one of my friends with a pass to Richmond?" requested a grave senator.

"It's useless, sir; I've already given passes to 200,000 men to go to Richmond, and they haven't got there yet," replied the witty Lincoln.

The Major and myself did not encounter so many difficulties, however, as Mr. Lincoln's 200,000 soldiers. Traveling in the slow coaches of the period, we managed to reach there on the third day after leaving Parkersburgh. It was the middle of July when we entered the place, and the busiest season there was just commencing. The slave-traders were arriving from the Cotton States to purchase their human chattels, and the tobacco merchants were busy preparing for their fall business. The city was full of strangers with plethoric purses, a fair share of whom had no sort of objection to while away a leisure hour in a combat with the "tiger."

The Major purchased an interest in a suite of handsomely furnished gambling-rooms in a desirable location, for which he paid \$1,100. The gentleman of whom we bought retained a third interest in them. We entertained our customers with suppers, which were served every night at eleven o'clock, and also furnished them, gratuitously, with liquors and cigars. In the course

of a few weeks we had the satisfaction of knowing that we were doing as prosperous a business in our line as any house in the city. Mr. Wilson was as popular with the sporting fraternity of Richmond as any gambling-house keeper in the city, and deservedly so. He was a plain, unassuming man, kind and obliging, of polished manners and easy address. It was his boast that he had not an enemy in the world. He was about fifty years of age and the father of a grown-up family, and had lived in Richmond nearly all his life. The Major was also a well-known character in Richmond, and an exceedingly popular one among the card-playing portion of the city; so much so, indeed, that he could easily have obtained an interest in any of the popular gambling-houses of the place, and had he located himself permanently there, could, without doubt, have amassed a fortune. But his rambling proclivities would not permit him to do so. Six months or a year was the utmost the Major could be induced to confine himself to any one place. But wherever he went he made valuable acquaintances, especially among the gambling fraternity, and there was no faro-dealer in Richmond who had the same influence among the negro-traders that the Major possessed. Numbers of these constantly filled the city, and were by far the best customers to the faro games. From August to November they were incessantly going and coming; and in the evenings our rooms were thronged with them. They made their headquarters at the gambling-rooms, made appointments to meet their friends there, and, being generally loaded with money, would play liberally against the faro-bank; while but in few cases would one win \$500 at one sitting, many of them, during a sitting of bad luck, would lose from \$1,000 to \$5,000, some having lost as high as \$20,000 in a single night. With all their bad qualities, I never knew a negro-trader to sue for money lost at gambling; but generally speaking it was not safe to gamble with any of them on a credit. No class in the South derived greater profits from their investments than the negro-trader, and none were held in greater abhorrence. In the more northern Slave States their advent on a farm was a source of unbounded terror and dismay to the blacks, to whom "to fall into the hands of the trader, to be sold down South," was their greatest fear; a threat to that effect generally having the power to reduce the most obdurate at once. Should business call them to a farm-house, the hospi-

talities of the place were not extended to them. The hand of friendship, except among those of their own ilk, never touched theirs; and brutalized as they were by their horrid traffic, and callous as they became from the cruelties attending upon it, they still retained a keen sense of their degradation. The slave-breeders of the Border States, after bartering with them his human flesh for their gold, would feel his reputation endangered if he recognized them socially in public. The lordly planter, whose laborers were supplied to him by the trader, would communicate with him only through his factor, and would have considered himself lowered if even seen in conversation with him. This social ostracism had the tendency to make them hate their own species; and their great object in life was to speedily make a fortune in their nefarious traffic, and withdraw from it as soon as possible, hoping their wealth would cover their former sins, and give them a respectable position in society. In manners, habits, and education, they were but very little farther advanced than the most ignorant blacks they bought and sold. Most of them had begun life as overseers on small plantations, at salaries varying from \$500 to \$2,000 per annum, according to the value of the place on which they were employed, or the duties entrusted to them. If they ever possessed a spark of humanity or decency, their slave-whipping profession in a few years completely quenched it, and they learned and retained through life the low mean cunning which characterizes the negro slaves under their charge. They obtained a knowledge, from the nature of their business, of the qualities of negroes: what amount of labor they could perform, and for what kinds they were most suitable; also the amount of labor requisite yearly on the various plantations, or the towns and cities adjacent to where they lived. They also made themselves acquainted with the chances which might arise regarding the rise and fall of slave property. From buying a single slave and selling at a profit, they would, step by step, increase their gains, until they had accumulated a sufficient fund to justify them in throwing up their situation as overseer and start out on their own hook as a buyer and seller of human beings. They would then invest money; purchasing in with the owner of some slave-pen, or possibly gain the confidence of some capitalist, whose thin-skinned scruples would not permit him to be publicly engaged in such a traffic. They then opened

a slave-pen of their own. To furnish these with an assortment of slaves suitable for their neighborhood, they visited the great slave mart of Richmond each summer and fall, that being supplied by the slave-breeders of Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, eastern Tennessee, and Kentucky.

It was the custom of these negro-traders, whenever they bought a new slave, to administer to him, as soon as convenient, a dose of seventy-five or a hundred strokes of a paddle. This instrument was shaped similarly to the bats used by school-boys in playing ball, and about the same size. It was made of tough oak wood, and was about two inches in thickness, being bored all over with small gimlet holes. The object of this last being, that when the air was expelled through these holes it would draw the flesh up, causing a sharp stinging sensation. Sometimes a rawhide was substituted. When the victim had partially recovered from this, he was lashed up again, and given another flogging. The object of this cruelty being to give him a "healthy scare," as it was termed; or, in plainer English, prepare him for his future discipline. "Indulge a nigger at the start," they argued astutely, and he'll take advantage of your kindness, shuah! He'll think he can lie and steal with impunity, and when you're compelled to whip him for his dirty tricks, sir, he'll cut away from you the very first chance he gets; then you've got to keep on whipping him, just as long's you own him. Spoils the sale of him, too. Nobody wants to buy a run-away nigger! But if you give him a "healthy scare" to begin with, you'll have no trouble afterwards. This inhuman policy was literally carried out in nearly every slave-pen throughout the South. The slaves, while there, were well fed and well clothed, without being compelled to work, in order to make them look sleek, and sell well, but were lashed unmercifully in order to make their prison a hell to them which they could only escape by getting a new master. Therefore, whenever a customer entered the pen, these unfortunates, being drawn up in line for inspection, would cry out, "Buy me, masser; I'se wants to lib wid ye;" or, "I'se a good hand for dat ar' work, massa," at the same time furtively watching the eye of the negro-trader, to see whether their actions were approved by him. The most miserable period of a slave's existence was when he was left to the tender mercies of the trader.



While in Richmond I frequently attended sales of slaves, when would be congregated swarms of traders from the Cotton States. The despairing faces and heart-rending cries of the poor wretches, huddled about the auctioneer's stand, as the descent of the hammer tore asunder wives and husbands, parents and children, found no throb of sympathy in the breasts of these inhuman fiends. I cannot recollect ever hearing one of them offer a single kind word, or even ask a question in a kind tone, of a slave under the hammer of the auctioneer, or do the smallest kindness in any way whatever; on the contrary, they would rattle off volleys of rude jokes, and obscene and scurrilous expressions, at the expense of the poor wretches, who had no power to prevent them from doing what they would.

One day a beautiful quadroon girl of eighteen or nineteen was placed on the block to be sold; her appearance created a decide sensation. She had been torn from her home by the sheriff and put under the auctioneer's hammer, to satisfy the creditors of her deceased master and father. The girl was in agony. Evidently tenderly raised, the tears of shame and mortification coursed down her cheeks, while she tried to shrink away from the lascivious looks and scurrilous remarks of the traders standing about—every now and then one more bold than the rest, reaching forth his hand to take hold of hers, her arms, or even her limbs, ostensibly to ascertain if the article on sale was perfect in wind and limb. At these she would dart an indignant glance and get farther back behind the auctioneer, her beautiful face crimson.

"Gentlemen," cried the auctioneer, striking with his mallet on his desk, to command attention, "we shall now offer you a rare bargain in the 'girl' Alice. She is eighteen years of age, and warranted sound, physically and mentally. She understands reading, writing, geography and arithmetic, and also all the duties of housekeeping. She can also play the piano beautifully."

"Christ!" roared one of the bystanders, "are we expected to buy all that ar' larnin' an' music, 'long with the gal?"

"She'll swing high for a mistress for some o' them 'parley vious' down there in New Orleans!" said another.

"Can't ye take her in, Dodds?" queried a diminutive swarthy-faced dealer from Georgia.

"Too much on the weepin' willer order for my cash," responded the corpulent individual with a bloated face addressed as Dodd.

"A couple o' dozen with a rawhide 'll damn soon fetch that ar' all right, and bring her into the traces, and I'm just the man to do it," responder' another voice from the crowd.

"You've hit it there Gibbs, 'cos she ain't never had the skin cracked on her yet," sung out another worthy.

But the bidding for Alice now becoming very spirited, all the traders bidding, she ascended rapidly in price, from four hundred dollars to eleven hundred. Dodd, of the bloated frontispiece, who was from New Orleans, had the call. I had become much interested in the girl. Her modest demeanor and her uncontrollable distress so affected me that I resolved that, sooner than fall into the hands of those brutes, I would bid fifteen hundred for her, and send her to my foster-mother, should I be so fortunate as to have her knocked down to me. Happily, I was relieved of such a burden, and enabled to save my money, to say nothing of escaping from the ridiculous position in which such a course would have placed me, by having my motives falsely construed. A new competitor now appeared on the scene, and commenced to contest the prize vigorously with the slave-dealers. He was a merchant of well-known respectability, who was influenced by some of her late father's friends to secure her. The trader who was now certain of his prey had just bidden \$1,250, when the merchant put in his bid of \$1,300, and was declared the owner of Alice; a remarkably heavy sum for a slave to fetch in those days.

The gambling-rooms of Richmond, as I said before, were the peculiar "stamping-ground" of these gentry, during their leisure hours. The excitement attendant upon seeing and participating in the games helped to while away some of those weary hours which hung so heavily on their hands from the time business closed for them until it was time for them to seek their several virtuous couches. They were our principal customers, and our best ones.

Lane arrived in Richmond a few weeks after us, and was given an interest in the bank. He and I did the dealing principally, assisted at intervals, if we desired, by Mr. Wilson or the Major. These latter gentlemen attended to the entertainment of our guests, and to the management of the business in general.

From the beginning of the month of August, up to the close of the race meeting in the middle of November, Lane and myself were kept at unremitting work, with not a moment to spare. During the race week, which was our busiest time, the Major did not come near the room, but devoted his time and attention solely to the turf and turfmen. Horse-racing was a weakness of the Major's; he was posted up in the pedigree of every thoroughbred horse which had made his mark on the turf in his time, and particularly acquainted with every great race that had been run in the country since the time when Eclipse and Henry contended for the honors of the turf on Long Island. Such noted turfmen as Col. Wm. R. Johnson, Mr. John C. Stevens, John Crowell, and others of that ilk, were deities in the eyes of the Major. And he would sooner have received a nod of recognition from one of them than from the "Hempe, or of hall the Roosbias," had he been standing before him, on his own icy soil.

The Major backed what he supposed to be the winning horse, on every available occasion; but, like many another of his profession, generally came to grief, and left the course a sadder, if not a wiser man.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE HORSE.

Many philosophers groping far down into the mists of time, for the origin of the horse, would have us believe the earth was replenished with horses, as it was repopulated with men, from those which were saved in the ark commanded by Captain Noah; and as the Captain discharged his cargo somewhere in the region of Mesopotamia, and near the head-waters of the Tigris and Euphrates, they insist, with their usual pertinacity, that from that country emanated the equine breed, whose descendants are found at the present day on nearly every part of the known globe. These learned sages have based their opinions entirely on biblical authority, which informs us that when Joseph, of the "coat of many colors," splurged it so extensively in that sacred land of cats and onions, that the horse was well-known in Egypt. We are also informed, by the way, that the lit-

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tle game of "cornering," so frequently practiced in Wall street, was well-known to the pious Joseph. He "cornered" all the corn in the country, and compelled the starving inhabitants to exchange for it their flocks and herds and houses and lands. Holy writ also makes us acquainted with the fact that, long after the death of Joseph, his countrymen were driven into the Red Sea by the Egyptian cavalry, and that by this speculation Egypt lost many men as well as horses.

That warbling maniac, Habakkuk, informs us that the Chaldeans had horses swifter than leopards and fiercer than evening wolves, leaving us to infer that leopards were, in the time of that prophet, exceedingly swift of foot, and that evening wolves were more fierce than morning animals of that species.

We are not compelled by any means to rely solely on the Bible for evidence of the antiquity of the horse. The sculptures excavated from the ruins of Assyria, Persia, and Egypt, many of which represent, in *bas relief*, those animals engaged in the chase, in labor, and in battle, inform us that the equine breed have been the friends and companions of men in those countries as far back as their annals extend. Herodotus and Xenophon described the fine qualities, and mention the abundance of horses possessed by the Assyrians, Egyptians, and Persians. The Greeks inform us they received the horse from the Egyptians, but do not mention at what period. Perhaps they were unable to do so. Homer speaks of horses being used at the siege of Troy, but the bard places them in front of chariots, never under the saddle. The Greeks contend that the Romans owe the horse to them; that they introduced it among them, and taught them how to ride it. If so, the Romans proved themselves worthy of the gift, for in horsemanship they were second to none. The Carthaginians, we are told, brought horses into Spain and Sicily, from whence they could easily be dispersed through Western Europe.

Stubborn people exist, who believe, contrary to the received orthodox opinion, that the horse was originally a native of Europe, and also that portion of Asia which lies east of the Ural Mountain chain. These cavilers contend that horses were imported at various times into Europe, by the Celts, Saxons, Teutons, Cimbri and Huns, who migrated from the great steppes of Asia, a region abounding in horses. These, passing into Eu-

ropé, took with them their shaggy and robust little horses, and in time, these receiving better care, the more stimulating climate of the North, together with frequent crossing on the native breeds, produced a larger, more powerful, and in every way superior animal.

They think, also, that the countries lying west and south of the Caspian Sea also principally derived their horses from the great central plateau of Asia. It is claimed that a trade of this sort existed many years before the Christian era, and that horses were brought, by the way of the Caspian Sea, west; and from thence into Persia, Assyria, Egypt, and Greece, and, by amalgamation with the native breeds, became light, graceful, and spirited.

As I know little or nothing about these matters, I shall dispute none of these things, but leave those interested to squabble it out amongst themselves. Authentic history asserts that the Celtic, Belgic, German, and British tribes were well supplied with horses at the invasion of Julius Cæsar. The Romans also tell us that those German and Scandinavian tribes who worshiped "Woden," raised on their "sacred reservations" a breed of white horses which were sacrificed to their gods.

From Spain have come finer breeds of horses than any other country in Europe. In the days of Carthage they obtained the Numidian breed abundantly, and during the long sojourn of the Moors in the country, they imported and cultivated the Arab breed. Between the ninth and tenth centuries this latter celebrated breed was cultivated under the Caliphs, and rendered thereby more perfect, in speed, beauty, and endurance, than any other known breed. This was accomplished by carefully culling out the most superior mares and stallions for breeding purposes, adding to this the careful rearing and training of colts, and not permitting them to labor except under the saddle. It is more than probable that no nation could have succeeded so well as did the Arabs. They loved their horses; they were their companions, and none understood their natures more thoroughly; yet it took them nearly a century and a half to bring him to his highest perfection. During the wars of the Crusades, these light and graceful steeds often carried their Saracen masters beyond the reach of danger, when their lives would else have paid the penalty. When stricken from the saddle, amid the strife and car-

nage of battle, the generous beast would not desert his master, but would remain until consciousness returned, and he feebly crawled into his saddle, when the good horse, with the speed of the wind, would carry him away to a place of safety. They were, however, unable to stand the shock of battle with the heavy beasts which bore the English knights, even when they outnumbered them ten to one.

The returning Crusaders brought with them many of these beautiful steeds to Europe, to cross on their own breeds, and which, no doubt, laid the foundation for those superior animals which are raised there at the present day. Ever since the horse has been subjected to the will of man, and taught to do his bidding, it is probable that he has made his speed to minister to his pastime, trials of speed having been popular from their earliest acquaintance with the animal, and having outlasted all amusements then popular, except the chase or athletic sports. Horse-racing was a regular part of the pastimes of the Greeks and Romans, and at the Olympic games purses were given to winning horses; but what these people chiefly delighted in was chariot-racing, of which numberless accounts are extant. We have, however, no direct proof that these nations paid any attention to improving the speed of their horses. Though Herodotus tells us horses were plentiful among the Assyrians, Medes, Persians, and Egyptians, yet we do not need his assurance of that fact, for we see them plentifully displayed at the present time, on the monuments and other sculptures excavated from their ruined cities. Why is it not more than probable that horse-racing was one of their amusements?

The Greeks and Romans considered the Persians the best horsemen in the world, and if we are to believe them, every man in that vast empire rode on horseback. Luckily, we are not compelled to swallow everything they have handed down to us. It is, however, highly reasonable to suppose that, among nations where horses were so plentiful, racing would be a popular amusement. No record is handed down to that effect, and we have as much warrant to opine that the different Tartar tribes inhabiting Central Asia and Europe, and who at times swept over these countries under Attila, Arphad, or Tengeris Kahn, and Tamerlane, also amused themselves with horse-racing, as well as murdering and pillaging. These freebooters were always on horse-

back, and it is presumable the rights of property were frequently tested by the speed of their horses. But let us leave speculation, and come to facts. Arabia may be considered the native country of the horse, and the place where he has been brought to the greatest perfection. No other horses have ever equaled these, for symmetry of form, firmness of skin, fire, docility of temper, fleetness and endurance; and it has been chiefly by crossing the breeds of other countries with those of Arabia, that the stock has been improved. Strabo, who lived about the beginning of the Christian era, asserted that horses were at that time unknown in that country a—thing rather difficult to believe—for the Arabs were a marauding and daring race, whose robberies constantly exposed them to retaliation from hostile armies, and it seems more than likely that the neighboring nations of Egypt, Syria, and Persia, abounding in horses, they would have at least captured some from their enemies, if they obtained them in no other way. At whatever period the horse may have fallen into the possession of the Arab, he has never fallen into kinder or more fostering hands. Every pains was taken to improve his looks, speed, strength, and endurance, and many of the owners of horses among the Arabs know the pedigree of certain of their animals far back for several centuries. Arabia was also the first country on the globe where the cultivation of speed was encouraged, and prizes given for horses to compete for, and which was really the foundation of our present system of turf-racing.

China, which contains about one-third of the population of the globe, and whose inhabitants are the most inveterate gamblers in the world, know nothing, comparatively speaking, about horse-racing. In the north of China the Tartar breed of horses exists, and answer tolerably for the labors of the field, and under the saddle; but their speed is very indifferent, and seldom put to the test. John Chinaman prefers to lose his money at cards, dice, chess, draughts, "tsé-mei," a game similar to the Italian "morra," than on the speed of horse-flesh. He is inordinately fond of cock-fighting, as well as combats between crickets, grasshoppers, etc. In Southern China horses are very scarce, and are not even used for traveling or rural labor. The government employs them, and has relays at certain distances throughout the empire, to transport their mails and government officials. These horses are also procured from Tartary. They are unable to endure the

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heat of the south more than a few years, when they lose their strength and become completely unserviceable. The great rivers and lakes, together with their numerous canals, in a great measure relieve the Chinese from the necessity for the services of the noblest of the brute creation.

## RACERS.

It is to England that we are indebted for race horses, and our present system of racing. Fine breeds from Spain and Arabia have been imported into that country during the last four centuries. Persia and the Barbary States have also yielded their best mares and horses, which were brought to England to improve the native stock by amalgamation. During the days of chivalry, speed was not required; strength only was sought for: to carry the rider and his ponderous harness of mail. By the time the Tudors ceased to reign over England, the hereditary land-owners had recovered from the effects of the cruel and devastating wars of the Plantagenets; and the chase, which had for a long time fallen into disuse, was revived. They vied with each other in cultivating the qualities of speed and endurance in their hunters. A new era was opened for the horse: speed and beauty were required in him, to render him suitable to minister to the amusements of the people. In the reign of James I. we find that several private matches were run for heavy wagers; the owners of the horses acting as their own jockeys. This kind of sporting rapidly increased in favor with the public. In the reign of Charles I., race-courses were built at Newmarket and at Hyde Park. It was during his reign that the custom was established of running for cups, instead of money, a precedent which has been followed up to the present day. During the reign of Charles II., the sports of the turf were encouraged, and became national. The Godolphin Arabian was imported in the reign of George II. This world-wide celebrity was the ancestor of some of the best thorough-bred racers the world has ever produced; and those who are learned in horse-flesh are of the opinion that there has never existed a trotter, worthy of the name, who was not a descendant of the Godolphin Arabian. It is said this noble animal was a present from the Emperor of Morocco to Louis XIV., and, after the death of that



monarch, fell into the hands of the English; but there are many conflicting opinions on the subject.

It was also during the reign of the second George that the celebrated Flying Childers made his appearance; the best race-horse England ever had, and perhaps the best the world ever saw. He was never beaten, and at Newmarket ran three miles, six furlongs, and ninety-six yards, in six minutes and four seconds.

About the same time saw the celebrated English Eclipse. This remarkable horse won for his owner over \$100,000, and was the progenitor of 334 winners of the turf. All nations seeking the "thorough-bred" racer—which means, in English parlance, one whose pedigree can be traced, without a stain, for eight generations, ending with horses of eastern origin—the Godolphin Arabian, Byerly Turk, or the Darby Arabian—had to seek them on the soil of England. She possesses five times, at least, the amount of thorough-breds more than the balance of the world, and has race-meetings at least once a week throughout the entire year, with the exception of about six weeks in the depth of winter. During the meetings at Derby and Newmarket, more money changes hands than at all the race-meetings in the United States during the year. The race-courses are attended by all classes of people, and are opened to the public free of charge, except the grand stands, to which admittance may be had for a few shillings. There is no distinction; the same price carries the peasant as well as the prince to any part of the course where spectators are allowed. What a contrast to the snobocracy of America! The slaveholding aristocracy of Charleston and New Orleans, of whom were composed the racing associations in those cities, caused magnificent stands to be erected for themselves and families, and their invited guests. None of their plebeian countrymen were admitted to them. Still later, when the slaveocracy were overthrown, the shoddy aristocracy, comprising the Jerome Park Racing Association, near New York, seized on half the grand stand, which was splendidly fitted up, for the exclusive use of the lords of wealth. They had also a fancy castle built, on a knoll nearly opposite the grand stand, with coffee-houses, restaurants, etc., attached. Within this hallowed precinct, none but the shoddyites and their invited guests might venture. What are we coming to in this free Republic?

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## THE HORSE IN AMERICA

Was unknown before 1493, when Columbus, on his second voyage, brought several with him to the West Indies. About 1519 the horse was introduced into Mexico by Cortez, and in 1530 into Peru, by Pizarro. In 1527 a Spanish vessel in distress, laden with horses, landed on the coast of Florida. They were taken on shore, from whence they made their escape into the wilderness, where they became wild, multiplied, and spread themselves over the vast region known as the Southern States, and far over the wild prairies, to the shores of the Pacific Ocean. From among those introduced into Mexico by the Spaniards in the time of Cortez, several escaped and became wild; and their descendants spread themselves over the North and East, so that, in course of time, the Indian tribes were abundantly supplied with horses. The descendants of those introduced into South America by the Spaniards—many of them escaped from the control of man—increased in numbers in their wild state, until they can be seen in droves of tens of thousands, on the immense llanos that stretch along the Orinoco and the Amazon, and also on the pampas extending from the Rio de la Plata to the confines of Patagonia. The color of the American wild horse is chestnut; but "pintos," or spotted horses, are found among them in abundance. All wild horses of Spanish origin, whether in North or South America, come under the appellation of mustang, and are imbued with the Numidian and Arab blood. These are small, but hardy, and easily sustained, besides being capable of great endurance under the saddle, having been frequently ridden a hundred miles in a day. Many of them possess great speed, from five hundred to one thousand yards, but scarcely any of them were ever known to last a mile.

## THOROUGH-BREDS OF AMERICA.

We are informed that early in the eighteenth century thorough-breds were brought from England to America, and shortly afterwards their breeding was encouraged by legislative enactment. It is probable they were first introduced by officials sent out to rule over the colonies. Virginia had been regarded as the race region of America, and her ascendancy on the turf was decided; so much so, that from time to time many of her racers were

bought by the colonies of New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and the Carolinas, and transferred to their own borders. In this way, competition was begot and fostered throughout the length and breadth of the land, and a fancy for turf sporting increased with the wealth and increase of the people. It is natural to suppose that owners of large plantations worked by slave-labor, fond of the chase and all kinds of field sports, should devote their attention to the raising of fine breeds of horses, more especially as the cultivation of the racer had already become popular with the gentry in England. They found this country, in soil and climate, particularly adapted to breeding and raising of thorough-breeds; thus the South, and afterwards the Southwest, became the home of the race-horse. It is true the States of New York and New Jersey have bred, trained, and run, some of the best race-horses this country has ever produced; but the inhabitants of the South and Southwest were an agricultural people, and from their planters and stock-raisers sprung a large majority of the turfmen who established and perpetuated racing in this country. These men were in very many cases among the most respected citizens in their States, and in their ranks might be found statesmen, lawyers, doctors, merchants, and planters. It was this fact which made racing popular with the people, and in no part of the country did it take such a hold on the masses as in the States of Virginia, Maryland, Kentucky, Tennessee, Louisiana, and South Carolina.

The era of racing in America is said to have commenced in 1734. Four years previous, Bull Rock, a son of the Darby Arabian, was imported from England, and, from time to time, for more than a century, new blood was infused into our racers by the best stock which could be procured from that country. 1734 is supposed to be the date of the first race for a prize—a saddle and bridle valued at £20; mile heats, four entries. The affair took place near the city of Charleston; a course was staked out for the occasion, to which the name of "York Course" was given. From year to year racing over this course was continued in February or March, and the prizes given were usually a silver bowl, tankard, or waiter, about the value of £100. In 1754 another course was established near the same city, which was called the "New Market," and where racing was continued up to 1770. About 1765 the first course of which we have any account in Virginia

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was opened near Richmond, and ten years later one was made near Baltimore, and, if I am not wrongly informed, two more on Long Island some few years previous to the commencement of hostilities between the colonies and the mother country. Philadelphia, also, had her race meetings previous to the revolution. During that struggle racing was, of course, suspended throughout the country, and for several years subsequent it did not revive in any shape worthy the name, save in South Carolina, where it was continued up to the time of our civil war. Efforts were made to revive it in Virginia after the close of the revolution, and also in Maryland, but met with but little success up to 1820. As early as 1787 racing was inaugurated in Lexington, Ky., which was its first introduction into the Southwest.

The revolution broke up racing in the country, nor can it be said to have revived until we had somewhat recovered from the effects of our last war with Great Britain, which places it at about 1820. No inducement was offered to put horses in training for public racing, on account of the scarcity of money in the country. Even so far back as twenty-five years ago, when money was plentiful, compared with the close or just subsequent to our war with Great Britain, \$800 was the regular purse given for four-mile heats, \$600 for three, and \$200 for two-mile heats. Racing did not, in fact, assume any importance here until after 1829, at which time the "Turf Register" was established at Baltimore, and to which paper the revival of that sport is, in a great measure, due. It examined into the different pedigrees of horses which led to the culling out of the pure stock from the impure, and kept before the public the names of prominent turfmen, horse-breeders, and upholders of the sports of the turf. It chronicled the different racing events which took place in the country, all of which, combined, gave a stimulus to racing in the Southern States, to which its circulation was chiefly confined. Fresh horses were imported from England, and the breeding of them entered into largely by the stock-raisers of Virginia, Kentucky, and Tennessee, who saw in the cultivation of the racer a source of large profit. Racing rapidly increased in popularity with the people. From 1838 up to 1848 was its golden era in America, previous to our civil war. In that decade there appeared on the turf a larger number of first-class horses than had ever before been seen in this country. It was during this time

that a race for one of the largest stakes ever run for in any country took place; I allude to the "Peytona Stakes," given at Nashville. This was the most profitable racing event which ever took place, and was worth more to the winner than any Derby or St. Leger ever run off; there being thirty entries for \$5,000 stakes and \$1,000 forfeit each. But four started in the race, leaving twenty-six to pay forfeit, making the stake worth to the winner \$41,000 net. It was won by Col. Thomas Watson's chestnut filly, "Peytona." The first match made to test the speed of the racers of Virginia and other Southern States against those of New York and New Jersey took place in 1823. It took place on Long Island, and was between Henry and Eclipse, for \$20,000 a side. Col. Wm. R. Johnson, of Virginia, made the match on the part of Henry, and Mr. John C. Stevens, of New York, on the part of Eclipse. This race, of three four-mile heats, was run in the presence of more than sixty thousand spectators, and won by Eclipse. The twelve miles were made in 23 minutes and 59½ seconds, and more than \$200,000 changed hands besides the stakes.

A few years later, the southerner again met the northerner on Long Island. This time the contestants were Post Boy, a son of the defeated Henry, and John Bascomb, a son of Bertrand, owned by Col. John Crowell, of Alabama, who backed his horse for \$10,000. Post Boy was backed by Mr. Tillotson and other prominent New Yorkers. The race, which was run in four-mile heats, was won by the southern horse, Bertrand.

The next match between the North and South, was that of Boston against Fashion. Boston was raised in Virginia and Fashion in New Jersey, and the latter was the victor. The race was also run on Long Island, for \$10,000 a side. It is believed by many eminent turfmen to have been one of the best races for that distance (four-mile heats) ever run in this country. The time was 7.32½—7.45½. Fashion carried 113 pounds, and Boston 124 pounds.

The last of these sectional struggles, to test the speed of their respective racers, took place on Long Island in May, 1845, between Fashion and Peytona, the latter being the victor. The match was an unequal one, and should never have been made; Peytona being five years old, while Fashion was quite aged. But the victory sent a thrill of triumph through the South, only

run for in any country," given at Nashville, which ever took in any Derby or Stakes for \$5,000 stakes in the race, leaving worth to the winner Watson's chestnut. It tested the speed of the horses against those of Eclipse. It took place on the 23rd, for \$20,000 a side the match on the New York, on the part of the seats, was run in the presence of the spectators, and won by 23 minutes and 59 seconds, and hands besides the

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equaled by that caused by the battle of Bull Run. After the defeat of Fashion, the hoofs of the high-mettled racer ceased to resound in the North and West. The business of raising thoroughbreds was abandoned for the more lucrative business of breeding trotters, and racing continued to be confined to the South until the commencement of the rebellion. From 1845 until the commencement of the rebellion, racing was principally confined to Charleston, New Orleans, Lexington, Nashville, Louisville, and Memphis. The rebellion broke up racing in the South, and drove those turfmen owning horses to the North, where the sport had sunk so low that scarcely any thoroughbreds were owned in the Middle or Eastern States. The Passaic County Agricultural Society, at Paterson, New Jersey, was the first to give encouragement to racing in the North. That attempt being successful, other localities were sought, with a view to extending the field of operation. Philadelphia was tried in the spring of 1863, with but indifferent success, and abandoned. In August, of the same year, a meeting was held at the old course, at Saratoga, and its success resulted in the building of the new and splendid course there, and it has become one of the most popular establishments in the country. The races at Saratoga prompted the organization of the American Jockey Club and the building of the magnificent Jerome Park establishment, and since that the one at Long Branch. The Jerome Park, Saratoga, and Long Branch races proved a great success, and opened the eyes of the South to the fact that the mudsills of the North had full as high appreciation of the sport of racing as the natives of their own sunny clime. The revival of racing is not confined to the States of New York and New Jersey. The Maryland Jockey Club have had several successful meetings at their newly made and handsome course. Race meetings were held during the summer months at St. Louis, Cincinnati, and many of the smaller cities of the West. The South, too, has gradually recovered her ability to indulge in her favorite sport, and meetings have been held at New Orleans, Mobile, Memphis, and Nashville.

Such is the field open to the enterprising turfman. And hence it is in no way surprising that many gentlemen of means are seeking and possessing themselves of the best race-horses which can be obtained, including many from England. Only a few years ago, thirty or forty horses at a race were considered a

sufficient number to insure a good meeting. Now they can be counted by hundreds at each of these popular gatherings. More money is invested in race-horses and race-courses, by three to one, than was ever before done at any period in this country. This revival of racing is due in a great measure to the American Jockey Club, at Jerome Park. The few gentlemen who initiated this institution found their numbers augmented by other gentlemen of wealth and influence, and in a short time the organization became a great success. Many of the members at once became owners of and breeders of high-blooded horses, and this created such a rivalry that the whole country became interested in the undertaking, and more racing associations were formed at other fashionable places. There are at the present time no less than four beautiful and popular race-courses within a few hours' drive of the city of New York, owned and patronized by the most wealthy and cultured people in the land. All these organizations owe their rise and progress to the American Jockey Club, and are governed by its rules and regulations. Acquisitions are daily being made to these associations, new stables of horses being formed, and many people who a few years ago could not be induced to attend a race-meeting alone, much less with their families, are now buying and breeding thorough-bred stock, for the purpose of enjoying that interesting and exciting pastime.

Many turfmen of the old school, and some of those who compose the new, think the race-horse of to-day vastly inferior to that of a couple of decades back. They assign as a reason for this opinion, that we have no horses at the present day, or nearly none, capable of running four-mile heats. They say, if the horses of the present day show more speed, it is because the tracks are faster, which certainly is the fact; that the trainers are more skilled in their art, which does not appear so reasonable. The truth is, the foggy turfman mourns for the good old time when endurance was as much sought for as speed in the racer, and when none but such as could run four-mile heats could be rated as first-class racers. Until within the last fifteen or twenty years, no horse, either in England or America, was considered a first-class racer unless able to do so. But on this subject a change has taken place in the opinions of the turfmen of both countries. The breeding of four-milers has been discon-

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tinued, and speed is more sought after than endurance. It is the prevailing opinion among turfmen, that, in cultivating the racer for four-mile heats, his speed is diminished. Dash-racing, both in England and America, has become more popular with the public. It brings to a race meeting four times the number of horses, increases the number of races, makes more betting and excitement, and last, though by no means least, has superseded the cruel practice of forcing a horse to run the exhaustive distance of twelve miles, which is much more often painful than amusing to the spectators.

From careful investigation, there is no evidence to show that the American racer of to-day has in any respect degenerated within the last fifty years; or that the English racer is in any way his superior. Both have sprung from the same stock, on both has been bestowed the same care in breeding and training, and whatever difference lies between them must be attributed to climate, etc.

Whether we or the English have the fastest horses, has long been a mooted question in this country. In England, but little attention is paid to timing horses during a race; in this country it is the barometer which informs us of the increasing or decreasing speed of our racers. Americans boast, and they are good boasters, that their horses can outspeed those of England. They cite the oft-quoted exploit of English Eclipse, and claim that many of our horses have made better time than four miles in eight minutes, which was his maximum. They claim that Lexington run four miles in less than seven minutes and twenty seconds, which was, they assert, faster time than that made by Flying Childers. The Americans assert that the elastic turf and the straight shape of the English courses are more favorable to speed than our circular ones over hard tracks. Whether a horse can make faster time over a mile circular track, or four miles on an open stretch, would seem to me a very nice question. I believe, however, it is the opinion of old turfmen, that the circular shape of a course favors both the speed and endurance; that in turning the curves the horse eases himself, and that any speed which he thus loses is more than compensated by his brushes on the stretches; while, in running four miles on a straight course, he has no opportunity for recuperation by once breaking the heavy force which presses him onward from the score to the goal.



The difference in running horses on turf, the prevailing custom in England, and running them over prepared tracks, as in this country, is still unsettled. Most Americans believe the former to be the fastest, but I am not aware that any one up to the present time has given any convincing proof in support of his opinion. Comparing the time which horses have made over different courses is no true test of their relative speed, some courses being much better for speed than others. The Metairie course, and those of Cincinnati, Saratoga, Paterson, and Providence, are considered the fastest race-tracks in the country. It is the same with the English courses—some are elastic, others are hard and heavy. Some of these run over a dead level plain, while others are half circular, or nearly so, and many are with ascending or descending grades, consequently horses are unable to make as fast time over some as over others. Eight minutes making four miles seems slow for such a horse as English Eclipse, when we have had several racers who have beaten it, while the three miles, six furlongs, and ninety-eight yards, made by Flying Childers in six minutes and four seconds, astounds us. The only true test of relative speed is to start the two horses together on the same track; and until this is done we shall have to suspend judgment on the comparative merits of English and American racers. But I doubt if this will ever be done to a sufficient extent to allow us to judge of the merits of the horses of the two countries. Nothing is more capable of disarrangement from slight causes than the race-horse, and it is unlikely that his exportation over three thousand miles of stormy sea would improve him. About fifteen years ago, a Mr. Ten Broeck, an American, took with him to England a stable of horses, for the purpose of competing for the trophies of the English turf. These thorough-breds comprised Prior, Prioress, Lecompte, and Charleston—none of them, however, fit representatives of the American racer, and having all met with defeat at home; two, Lecompte and Charleston, being but little better than broken down. They were defeated in their first campaign, and though Prioress, in the fall of 1857, won, at New Market, the Cesarovitch stakes, after a dead heat with Queen Bess and El. Ham, she was so favorably weighted by the handicapper, compared with the other two dead heaters, that her subsequent victory, in the deciding heat, did not add much to the prestige of

the American turf. Mr. Ten Broeck then imported a fresh lot of American horses, and was somewhat more successful. With one of these, Starke, he won the Goodwood Cup, and with Umpire carried off several of the two year old racers. Umpire in the following year became a prominent favorite for the Epsom Derby, but in this great race was beaten. Beyond an unimportant attempt in the same direction, by Robert Harlan, of Kentucky, nothing has been done to test the relative speed of the racers of the two countries.

When Mr. Ten Broeck first carried his stable of race-horses to England, some of the papers spoke of the affair as an international one, and Mr. Ten Broeck as a representative American turfman. The truth is, he had never been a leading turfman in this country, and hardly knew anything about racing matters. America has had a hundred horses who could have beaten Starke and Prioresse, in their palmiest hours. The six or seven horses of Ten Broeck were contending against fourteen or fifteen hundred picked horses on their own ground, so that any one can understand that his experiment was no fair test of the relative speed of the American and English horse. Mr. Ten Broeck was one of the cleverest gamblers in the country, and had for years beaten the most skillful at their own peculiar games; but regarding racing matters he was deficient. By shrewd management he got control of the Metarie course at New Orleans, and shortly afterwards made that celebrated match on Lexington, against time, for \$10,000. It has long been the opinion of shrewd turfmen that the match for the sum stated was no match at all, but merely a hippodroming affair, for the division of the gate money. However that may be, Lexington covered the ground inside 7.19 $\frac{1}{4}$ , the time specified, and gave to Mr. Ten Broeck notoriety as a turfman, which was what he wanted. Having gained his prestige, he embarked for England with his stable of horses, which, in that country, whatever may have been his antecedents, provided he has met his betting engagements, give to a man a social standing among turfmen. Such a position gave him a favorable opportunity for making his matchless skill at cards useful to him—an opportunity which he did not fail to improve. He also made his stable of horses a self-supporting institution. Aside from the few races which he won, the proceeds of which would not have supported him in

his extravagant style of living, six months, he made his horses and his position on the turf both profitable to him. He took care to make the acquaintance of such Americans visiting England as he knew would be willing to back his horses, from national pride, or desired to back other horses on his judgment. The confidence of such he used to enrich himself. Ten Broeck, with his American "gulls," proud of his acquaintance, and more than ready to be fleeced by him, could be seen together at Tattersall's, at the sporting clubs, or on the turf, where they would meet aristocratic looking persons, with whom the former seemed on terms of great intimacy. "How are you laying on your horse, Mr. Ten Broeck?" Or if he had none starting, "What's your favorite, Mr. Ten Broeck?" "What odds are you taking on him, sir?" Ten Broeck, after consulting his betting book for a few moments, would draw out, in his habitually dispassionate tone, "I'm taking three to one, or five to two" as the case might be. His friends would close by booking him down for several hundred pounds. These booking bets were but shams, and those making them with Ten Broeck, his confederates—men moving, too, in the higher circles of society; for he was too shrewd to put himself in the power of common adventurers upon the turf, whose equivocal position might at some future time throw discredit on his own character. His bets, booked in the presence of his American "gulls," would incite them to take stock with him in betting on a horse which himself and "pals" knew perfectly well had not a ghost of a chance to win. And frequently such bets were made, when it was well known to Ten Broeck and his confederates, that the horse would not start in the race at all. By such cunning frauds as this just related, and his superior skill at cards, he managed to sustain himself in England in splendid style for many years, and to return from that country with an immense fortune.

#### TROTTERS.

Many of our students learned in "horseology" contend that the racer and the trotter are originally the same. These learned sages proceed to say that no trotter, worthy of the name, whose pedigree can be traced, is without the blood of the Godolphin Arabian, and that whenever a horse is bred, tracing back

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through forty-nine veins, or ramifications, to the Godolphin, his trotting speed will nearly equal that of our present racers. As this abstruse science of horse-blood is too deep for me, and as it does not belong to the province of this work, I shall leave the subject to those versed in equinology, and let them argue it to their hearts' content. Suffice it to say, that in no country on the face of the globe has the same amount of care been given to the cultivation of the trotter as in the United States, and the selective breeding of them has added millions to the wealth of the country. The trotters here, which can make their mile in three minutes, are numbered by thousands, while those who can make their mile in two minutes and forty seconds are numbered by hundreds, and many appear every summer on the turf, at the different courses, who can make their mile far down among the twenties. And in no other country but this has the trotter ever completed twenty miles in an hour in harness. Within the last twenty years several attempts have been made to introduce trotting races into England, but without success. Its failure may be attributed to the want of encouragement from the land-owners and other wealthy classes, who are prejudiced against any foreign innovations on the sports of the turf, or, as D'Israeli has it, "the noble pastime of England's aristocracy." There are many trotters in the country. Many have been imported from America, and no little attention has been paid, within the last decade, to the breeding and training of them; but very few have been distinguished for speed, and very few can be found to make their mile in three minutes. There are no prepared courses for trotting, and such matches as have taken place have been performed over the public highway, or turf, which lessens the speed of the trotter in harness about ten seconds to the mile. These trotting matches, of which several have been made during the last twenty years, were well attended, especially by the lower and middle classes, and at some of them large sums of money have changed hands. I think, however, the day is still far distant when trotting will be one of the popular sports of England.

The people of France have paid more attention to trotting and trotting horses than the people of England. Within the last decade several thorough-breds have been imported from America for the purpose of breeding. In the summer of 1867 the racing association of Rouen gave liberal purses to trotters; this was the

first affair of the kind which ever took place in Europe. Many of the native trotters, both of France and England, met at Rouen to compete for the trophies. The meeting was largely attended, and if no extraordinary time was shown, in comparison to what is commonly done on American courses, the races gave general satisfaction. The late Franco-Prussian war has done much to injure the advancement of trotting and racing in France; but the deep interest taken in the cultivation of the trotter by the wealthy landowners, and the increasing desire of the wealthy classes generally, living in or near Paris, to provide themselves with fine blooded stock, makes it presumable that in the way of turf sports trotting races may in a few years become as popular as running races now are.

Considerable attention has been paid by the Russian government to the breeding and raising of trotting horses. The hardy breeds of Northern Russia, when intermixed with the more mettlesome ones of the south-eastern part of the empire, make remarkably good trotters. Russia has to-day a greater number and a better class of trotters than any country in Europe. The favorite method of testing their speed is upon the ice, and harnessed to light sledges. During the winter season, when the bosom of the Neva becomes a way of glittering ice, these trotting-matches are very frequent and popular with the people.

#### VALUE OF TROTTERS.

No kind of stock-raising has ever been, in any part of the world, so lucrative as the breeding and raising of trotters in the United States, and year by year it is becoming more so. About twelve years ago, Flora T. , the fastest trotter the world had ever seen, up to her time, sold for \$8,000. To-day any horse who can trot in 2.30 will bring nearly as much, while horses that can trot a mile in 2.24, 2.23, 2.22, 2.21, will bring from \$15,000 to \$35,000, and some, in the possession of wealthy men, cannot be bought for \$60,000. Such men, however, have more money than they can spend—a pinching evil to society. They crave notoriety, which the possession of a celebrated fast horse can confer on them, while they, in return, are unable to confer any notoriety on the horse. However, to make a horse worth a certain price, it must be shown that he can bring back

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to his owner the money paid for him, with at least legal interest, if no more. Fancy prices set upon horses go for nothing. Mr. O'Kelly, the owner of English Eclipse, asked for him £25,000 and a life annuity of £500 a year. Mr. O'Kelly's demanding his price and receiving it (which he did not) are two very different things. Russia, England, and Portugal have given, to procure the finest and largest diamonds in the world, fabulous prices, while thousands of their people were starving for bread. These senseless stones are useless to those countries, save to adorn the state of royalty; yet the wealth of the Rothschilds would not buy one of them. The Vatican, Pitti Palace, Dresden Gallery, and that of the Louvre, contain many works of art which originally brought but a mere pittance to the toll-worn artist under whose hands they grew, yet at the present day untold gold could not purchase them.

It is the being wanted for the stud which raises the price of racers and trotters. Whenever a horse has established a reputation by his frequent success on the turf, he or she is sought after for the stud. Twenty years ago, Lexington, then thought to be the best colt in the United States, was offered for \$2,000, and also with him went half his engagements for mile and two-mile heat races. After the accomplishment of his celebrated feat against time, he sold for \$15,000; that then being the largest price ever paid for a horse in this country. His offspring, Norfolk, some years later brought the same price in greenbacks, which were then worth about sixty cents on the dollar. About five years ago Kentucky sold for \$15,000, at auction. In 1870, Kingfisher brought \$15,000, after having won his two most important stakes for his owner. Enquirer also was sold for \$15,000, after winning all his important stakes, and Longfellow, just before the close of the racing season, a year ago (1871) was held at \$20,000. It was almost unprecedented success upon the turf, which raised the price of these horses, and those who bought them did not do so with any expectation of getting their money back on the turf. The price of racers has remained almost stationary during the last thirty years, while those of the trotter have increased treble during the last decade; the reason of this being the trotter is much more profitable to his owner than the racer. Trotting associations hang up heavier purses than racing ones; besides, trotters can make money for

their owners, without their risking a cent outside their keeping and transportation. This may be accomplished by running for a division of the gate money—a practice which, to the disgrace of trotting, too often obtains in this country. During a summer campaign a first-class trotter can gain for his master from three thousand to five thousand dollars. The trotter, unlike the racer, is at nearly all times a saleable article, and in consideration of the advantages named, is always a more profitable, as well as a safer investment than the racer. The owners of the latter have to depend upon their success on the turf, to support themselves and their stables. They can depend on no division of gate money, and if one or more of their horses do not succeed in winning a few purses during the year, their expenses eat them up. If a man cannot possess a first-class racer, he is very unfortunate to possess any. None but those able to support a stable for his own amusement, or a practical turfman, should have anything to do with racers. All persons who have any respect for their money should place it in some safer investment. I have known, within the last thirty years, many prominent turfmen, and many of them possessors of large and handsome stables; but I have yet to see the first one among them who acquired his money by racing. It is the breeders of the racers and trotters who have been benefited by the sports of the turf, as well as many of the racing establishments throughout the country.

It is only within the last few years that trotting races have been established on a respectable footing in this country. Formerly the trotting ground was under the control of a set of sharpers, who used it as a means of fleecing the unwary. The owners and trainers of horses carried on their swindling so successfully for many years that they had settled down into the belief that frauds were a legitimate part of the sport. The owners of tracks either connived at these or participated in them. Many proprietors were compelled to see their patrons barefacedly robbed in silence, or have their courses rot on their hands for want of patronage. The owners of several trotters would conclude together, and make an agreement to trot over a certain course on a day named, for a division of the gate money. This, of course, with the sanction of the proprietor of the track. The announcement would appear in the public prints, and flaming

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placards, posted everywhere, announced that the race would take place at such a time, for a purse sometimes of several thousands of dollars; the amount being stated according to the locality. A ten thousand dollar purse might be suitable for New York, Philadelphia, or Baltimore, while five hundred dollars would be large enough for the smaller towns of the West. The meeting might call to the grounds from one thousand to ten thousand or more spectators. At some of the trotting races in the vicinity of New York, as many as thirty thousand spectators have been present repeatedly. The owners of the horses, their trainers, and confederates on the outside, had a perfect understanding with each other. Should the public make of any horse a favorite, and bet heavily upon him, their favorite would be very like to come out second best in the race, and their money would find its way into the pockets of the owners of the horses, their trainers, and confederates. These rascally proceedings were not confined to any particular locality, but were more or less practiced all over the country, and are so still in many of the smaller places in the South and Southwest. These things could not be effectually concealed, and the cries of the victims of these frauds have rung out in tones not to be mistaken, all over the land, for many years, without any particular remedy being applied to put a stop to them. An act passed by the legislature would have put an end to them, within the jurisdiction of the State passing such act. The very worst of the scoundrels would have hesitated before perpetrating his frauds, if the doors of the state prison were yawning to receive him the moment he was detected. But the generality of law-makers with which we have been blessed, in this free and enlightened country, would view the stealing of a loaf of bread by a starving man as a crime worthy the penitentiary, but would consider the robbing a man on a race-track, by foul driving or other fraudulent shifts known to some of the trotting fraternity, only a shrewd piece of financiering. But happily, where trotting is conducted on a large scale, as around New York, Buffalo, Kalamazoo, Providence, etc., etc., these track-thieves have no longer an opportunity to ply their vocation. Trotting associations composed of respectable citizens have been organized in most of the States, new rules and regulations have been framed, and are at the present time rigidly enforced.



## POOL-SELLING.

When the stranger first makes his appearance in the betting-ring of the English race-course, he may well imagine himself among a crowd of bedlamites. A thousand throats are stretched to their utmost, crying out their slang betting phrases of "monkies," "ponies," "tenners," "fivers," "one to three," "four to six," etc., while the noise and confusion, which is over and surrounds all, is nothing less than pandemonium itself. I remember when, in this country, men in the higher walks of life, many occupying high official positions, were not ashamed to be seen on the race-track, with money in their hands, calling out like auctioneers the bets they wished to make on their favorites. Such things were fashionable in this country till within the last fifteen years. "I'll bet five hundred dollars with any gentleman that Truxton is the winner," sung out General Jackson, on the quarter-stretch of the Nashville course, the said Truxton being his own horse, about to start in the race.

"I'm your man, General," responded Col. Jimmy Smith, a small stock short card player, who would not bet five hundred dollars on anything except to have the honor of saying he made such a wager with General Jackson.

"I'll bet five hundred dollars with any gentleman that Truxton is the winner," reiterated the General, without noticing Col. Jimmy's offer of acceptance.

"I'll take it," cried Smith, running up to the hero of New Orleans.

The General paused in his promenade, and fixed his eyes full-cocked upon Col. Jimmy, then replied, in a freezing tone, quite loud enough for the bystanders to hear, "You don't understand me, sir; I said I'd bet any *gentleman* five hundred dollars that Truxton will win the race," and turning away, he continued at the same time his walk, and his "I'll bet any gentleman five hundred dollars that Truxton is the winner."

The custom of crying out bets on the race-course has passed away, and is replaced by the more refined and quiet method of pool-selling. This system was inaugurated some fifteen or sixteen years ago, and is now in vogue on every race-track of any pretensions in the country. Pool-selling answers well enough when fairly conducted; but it has its abuses, which should be remedied.

In the first place, racing associations charge three per cent. on what money is won, and at many of the smaller of the racing and trotting meetings, three per cent. of the whole amount of the pool is charged, that is, upon the winnings and the investments. Now this is a fraud upon the public. Racing associations make enough from their gate-money, and should have pool-selling done gratuitously on their tracks, for the benefit of their patrons. Pools sold should be made play or pay, otherwise wrong may be done to innocent persons, as the following circumstance, which happened a few years ago in Saratoga, will show. The night before the race Cottrill sold as first choice in the pools, and several thousand dollars were invested on him. Before morning Naragansett, in a trial speed, ran a mile in 1.48. This becoming known to a few initiated, who had large stakes on Cottrill, the owner of that horse announced that large spots or welts had broken out on his horse during the night, and appealing to the judges, they allowed the horse to be withdrawn, so that his backers recovered their money. Had not Naragansett run that fast trial speed, the chances are that Cottrill would have started. If such a fraud could be perpetrated on one of the first class race-courses, and on one of the most fairly managed, how easily could it be done, and no doubt often is, on the smaller and more obscure courses in the country. Such sharp practice would tell for nothing, if pool-selling were made to play or pay. The pool-seiter has also his favorites, and it is in his power to benefit them greatly, though by so doing he does a corresponding injustice to the betting public. At a nod from a favorite, a pool is suddenly knocked down to him, or another sign from the same source causes the auctioneer to dwell loud and long. The system of pool-selling gives owners an opportunity to bet against their own horses, which many of them do if they think they will not win. Before the system of pool-selling obtained, the turfman betting against his own entry would be dishonored, and such things were not tolerated on the turf; but turfmen of the present day practice it in the pools, and no one considers it strange. The turfmen of old never laid against their own stables, and though many of the modern ones do, it is a practice which ought not to be tolerated. It cannot be denied that pool-selling has done away with many evils of the turf, and notably the noise and confusion which prevailed formerly on a race-course, in the making of bets, hunting up the holders of

stakes, and the quarrels and fights which ensued about the naming of bets. Pool-selling is also a great advantage to those who lay against the favorite, and who always take the odds. In pool-selling, sometimes as much as forty to one are laid against certain horses, while rating that way in the pool it would be impossible to get any one on the outside to lay any such odds. There are no persons in this country who would take such odds as forty to one, or even twenty to one, and on a horse that would sell as low as forty to one in a pool, odds of ten to one could not be obtained in the ring.

#### GAMBLERS ON THE TURF.

No disinterested class of men in this country have shown the same liberality towards the turf as gamblers. Whenever funds have been scarce, or have been wanted for the opening of a new course, or to give purses for a race meeting, they have invariably contributed liberally whenever called upon. They have always shown the same generous spirit in assisting needy turfmen, and have never been found wanting in upholding the interest of the turf. Such at least has been their record for the last half century, notwithstanding the efforts made at various times, by many of the newspapers of the country, to cause them to be expelled from the race-courses altogether. To be the fountain-head of authority has been the itch of wealth, and to it the majority of our cultured classes have pandered. Previous to the civil war, a gambler was not allowed entrance to the grand stand on the race-course at Charleston, S. C., but a negro servant was. At the same time public women were not allowed on the Metairie course in New Orleans, unless in a carriage, and then were obliged to drive to the center of the course, and be confined to their carriages during the race. Such invidious distinctions have disappeared from our race-courses, as 'tis proper they should do in a free country like ours. Only the snobocracy of which the Jerome Park racing association is composed tried to pattern after their exclusive brethren of New Orleans and Charleston; but the arrogant presumption caused such a howl of indignation from the public to resound about their ears, as compelled them to abandon their purpose. Racing associations that want to make exclusiveness one of their regulations, should be taught that it is not necessary

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## TURF.

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for a man to have a voucher, or a woman a marriage certificate in her pocket, in order to gain admission to the grand stand of a race-track.

Many gamblers have owned and run race-horses to their misfortune, and many have owned tracks; but, after thirty years' experience, I have never known, and I have yet to learn, of a gambler being engaged in a fraudulent race transaction. I have heard, however, of several, and know of my own knowledge of two instances, where jobs were successfully put up by turfmen, to rob gamblers. No class of persons behave themselves better than gamblers on the race-course, or interfere less with its good order and management; yet, notwithstanding this honorable record in their favor, I agree with those punctilious gentlemen of the press, and others, who imagine all gamblers thieves, and their appearance on a race-course, otherwise than spectators, fraught with some rascality towards the betting public—I agree with these honorable gentlemen in so far that I think gamblers should keep away from race meetings altogether. It would be a saving to the fraternity, of more than \$100,000 annually. With regard to numbers, their presence would not be missed, except at the pool stands, and at the pool-selling rooms in the city during a race week, in consequence of which the betting, which gives such a spicy interest to the race, would greatly decrease, and perhaps the loss would add to the moral improvement of the spectators. No gambler that I know of has ever yet done any good for himself on the turf.

Formerly it was amusing to see a young, just-fledged sport, with a badge fluttering from the breast of his coat, while strutting up and down the quarter-stretch, and calling out the name of his favorite, and laying his money upon him. He thought the position stylish, and imagined himself the observed of all observers. His knowledge of horse-flesh was about as profound as that of a citizen of Venice, and he was backing his favorite because some jockey or stable-boy had given him a "point" that he was a "rattler," or perhaps he himself had seen him win a race the previous spring or fall. But he never once gave a thought to his present condition, what weight he was to carry, or the abilities of his competitors. Such considerations did not for a moment perplex his brain. To lay his money was all he wanted, and sooner than fail in that object he would give long odds. This is a

fair sample of the reckless manner in which gamblers squander their money on the turf. Since pool-selling has become the custom, the gamblers flock to the pool-rooms in the city, during a race meeting, or to the pool-stands on a race-course. They pitch upon their favorites without any knowledge of their capabilities, except such as they learn from the turfmen, and will often run one up in the pool, in their eagerness to get him, until he is made a favorite largely over the field; often, too, when four or more horses start in the race. Such a thing as a horse becoming a favorite over the field, when four or more horses start, is in England a thing almost unknown. In the palmy days of Gladiateur, when practical turfmen were convinced that England had no horse to equal him in speed, the odds were never more than two to one in his favor when as many as five horses contended for the prize. English book-makers have been generally successful on the turf, simply because they have invariably backed the field. "It is only fools," say they, and their opinions should be of some value, "that will pick a horse in a race." There are but few professional book-makers that have not made themselves an independent fortune in the business. There are no intelligent turfmen in this country, of thirty years' standing, who will not acknowledge that they might now be wealthy had they laid their money on the field instead of the favorites.

It would seem that their constant losses on the turf for many years would have disgusted gamblers with the sport of racing altogether. Such, however, is not the case; at any rate with a large majority. To-day they are ready to re-commit the follies of yesterday, and, as few of them ever take the trouble to think on the subject, I think it very unlikely they will improve. I shall here mention another great drain on the pockets of gamblers, or at least some of the more successful of them. As soon as they have accumulated \$40,000 or \$50,000, their ambition is to own a stable of racers or trotters. They expect to reap from this notoriety as well as gain. Such gamblers have a very imperfect knowledge of horses, at best; consequently are obliged to call to their aid some trainer of experience, and these gentry never let a fat pigeon escape their fingers until they have plucked him clean. They use the gambler that falls into their clutches much the same as a rascally lawyer uses his rich client. When

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horses are bought, it is by recommendation of the trainer, who hits generally on such as are broken down, and whose owners are glad to get rid of them at any price. Between such persons and the trainer a perfect understanding exists, and the horses are sold for four or five times, and some times even ten times as much as they would fetch at an ordinary sale; and the trainer pockets the lion's share of the spoils, out of which he fleeces his master, with as little compunctions of conscience as if he were really giving him his best judgment and advice. If the horses are racers they never win a stake for their owner, and the expenses of his stable, cost of entries and transportation, his losses by backing them, to say nothing of what he is chiseled out of by his enterprising trainer, finally drains him of his last dollar, and when he wants to turn his horses into money, no one will buy them on any terms whatever, and they are left worthless, as they are, on his hands. Such has been, in nine cases out of every ten, the fate of gamblers whose evil genius—ambition—has led them on to the turf. Those who have fallen into the hands of trotting men have not fared one whit better; in fact, if possible, they have fared worse; their downfall has certainly been more speedy. If a shrewd trotting trickster can flatter, persuade, or cajole him into the purchase of a fast trotting horse, he is lost. No artifice is left untried to convince him his newly-acquired purchase has extraordinary speed. When this is accomplished he is easily induced to match him against a horse which his steerers have already agreed upon for him, and which they know can outspeed him with the greatest ease. Hundreds of gamblers have, from time to time, been inveigled and ruined in this manner by trotting men. The latter know right well that no class of men will bet their money so recklessly on a mere fancy as gamblers; consequently they are ever on the alert to fleece them. Gamblers have been too often the victims of their wily tongues; and if they continue to do so they will surely fall victims to their insidious artifices.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## WASHINGTON CITY.

The races were over in Richmond, and the crowds drawn thither by them from the surrounding country had all dispersed. Even the negro-trader, with his droves of manacled slaves, had departed for the South, and the gay and festive city, where money was so plentiful during the summer and fall, was now but a dull and unprofitable place for the gambler. The Major and myself, during the three months of our stay, had derived a net profit of about nine thousand dollars from our share of the gambling-house, which, finding there was no prospect of making any more at present, we disposed of, to Messrs. Lane & Wilson. We had determined to establish ourselves in Washington for the winter, and try our fortune among its law-makers, office-holders, political adventurers, lobbyists, and such-like cattle, who flock there as naturally, during a session of Congress, as crows to a carrion.

We found on Pennsylvania Avenue a desirable suite of rooms, which we fitted up tastefully, if not extravagantly. In those days, gambling-houses were not fitted up in such sumptuous style as has come to be the custom in these days; in fact, nothing like it. We found the place dull enough, as is always the case in Washington until after the holidays are over. Such strangers as were in the town, consisted of persons having claims against the government, who were waiting, with what patience they might, for that honorable institution to open the ponderous iron jaws of the treasury, and grant them relief. Besides these, the usual crowd of hungry office-seekers bided their time without a cent in their pockets. We found in the place many gamblers, most of them residents, but still many strangers had already opened their winter campaign there. Five farobanks besides our own were already in full operation, one of them being of the exclusive and aristocratic order, where none were admitted but high government officials, senators, members of Congress, wealthy lobbyists, contractors, and their invited guests. The patrons of this bank were entertained gratuitously with the daintiest viands, the choicest wines, liquors, and

cigars. It was owned and conducted by persons calling themselves gamblers, from Baltimore, who lived in extravagant style, separated themselves from the others of their class, and would no more think of speaking to a common gambler on the street than a savagely virtuous matron would be seen in conversation with one of the frail sisterhood. None of the other gamblers were invited to their rooms; consequently the means by which such an extravagant establishment was kept up was known only to its owners. The other faro-rooms in the city were conducted on pretty much the same basis as our own; that is, we made no distinction between our patrons, treated them all with civility, furnished them with liquors gratuitously, and played exclusively. We however gave to our patrons a limit of \$25, and \$100. But one other room in the city (knowing, of course, nothing about what the exclusive bank gave), gave the same limit.

This place was owned by a man of the name of Samuel Shirley, who had for many years conducted a gambling-house in Washington, and had drawn upon himself the ill-will of the other gamblers of the place, on account of his haughty disposition and supercilious manners.

He was a very timid gambler, and the previous winter had placed so small a limit on his game as to virtually drive away those gamblers and others who desired to play heavily. By this means he secured the play of treasury clerks, and some of those from others of the departments, and from these he managed to make a respectable living.

A month or so before our coming to Washington, there arrived in the place two gamblers from Georgia, who bought an interest in his house, and opened a faro-bank, to which they invited all the gamblers in the vicinity, offering them, if they would come there to play, a larger limit than any other house that could be found in the city. The principal moneyed faro-players accepted the invitation, to their misfortune, as the bank dealt with more than usual success. The new comers were a Mr. George Simpson, a man of about fifty, and his partner, Mr. John Cotton, about twenty-one years of age. These persons were strangers to the gambling fraternity of Washington, no one in the city knowing anything either of them or their histories. According to the elder, Mr. Simpson, he had been a negro-trader and a horse-trader, had roamed for several years over



the South and Southwest with a stable of quarter-horses, and while in this business amused himself, as he expressed it, by "dealing a game of faro occasionally, when I came across a good-natured set of boys with plenty of cash." Mr. Simpson was a large, heavy-set man, with sandy hair and whiskers, while his eyebrows and lashes were nearly white. I said he was fifty years of age, but he looked much younger. His florid face was the picture of health, and his blue eyes yet sparkled with the fire of youth. His favorite attire consisted of a green "shad-bellied" coat, with long flaps hanging over its many pockets, and ornamented with rows of bright brass buttons embossed with rampant steeds in the last stage of prancing. His vest, of green velvet, was adorned with round gold-varnished buttons, on each of which a dog's head shone conspicuous, and which also possessed wide pockets covered by deep flaps. His nether limbs were encased in a pair of drab inexpressibles, the bottoms of which had modestly retired from public view, into the legs of a pair of red-top hunting-boots. A broad-brimmed hat covered his head, and in the voluminous ruffle which sprang from his shirt bosom, sparkled a large and valuable diamond. He wore a high shirt collar, and around his neck, below it, the ample folds of a large red silk handkerchief. A heavy embossed chain, from which dangled a few seals and a miniature jockey's cap, saddle, spurs, horse-shoes, whip, etc., hung from his watch-fob. Mr. Simpson was a sociable personage, liberal with his money in a bar-room, had an exalted opinion of himself, and, being very loquacious, seemed desirous of convincing every one he met, of the immense superiority of Mr. John Simpson. Mr. John Cotton, his partner, had a fat, stupid-looking face, the cheeks and upper lip being covered with a small crop of peach-down; but his big wall eyes failed to give forth one spark of intelligence as he talked with you or pursued his business. His hair was tow-colored, as were also his eyebrows, the hairs of which were few and far between. Some fashionable tailor of the period had exhausted his art in order to render him resplendent in broadcloth and fine linen, and, "Solomon, in all his glory," certainly was not arrayed like him. In his ruffled shirt-bosom also blazed a diamond, while a large gold chain hung loosely from his neck to his fob, where it was attached to a small gold watch. Shirley and Cotton were both unsocial, and of a taciturn disposition; but

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whatever was lost to the firm from their reserve, was more than overbalanced by the loquacious and braggart Simpson.

The firm of Shirley, Simpson & Cotton, received some rough handling from the tongues of the sports who frequented our rooms, many of whom had lost their all (against the concern), consequently retained no very good feeling toward any of its members.

"I wonder where Shirley ever picked up that horse-thief, Simpson?" inquired a toothless old sport named Crane, an old resident of Washington, and a rather heavy loser (against the firm mentioned). The question was asked one evening in our rooms when no play was going forward, but several gamblers present, some of them citizens of the place, but the majority of them strangers. The subject had been brought up by one of the party relating how many bets he had lost there consecutively, on several occasions, while playing against Cotton's dealing.

"Picked up hell!" said a fellow in reply to Crane's question. "He don't know enough to pick up anything, unless it's a pocket-book that isn't his'n, the consumptive snipe."

"Maybe Simpson picked up Shirley, who knows?" chimed in another gentleman.

"Shouldn't be surprised; that feller Simpson knows his p's and q's; he ain't no fool," said the man who had replied so contemptuously to Crane's question in the first place.

"I'll bet he's one of Murrill's gang!" cried Crane.

"Did you ever notice how skeered that rabbit-faced feller, Cotton, is o' him? Them moon eyes o' his'n are allus looking arter Simpson when he's dealing, as if he was doin' suthin' he'd no business to, and was afraid of catching hell for it. Why, he'd overlook all the bets he'd win, if Shirley warn't a lookin' out fur him," said another of those present.

"He deals so confounded lucky, that he can afford to over- look half he wins and then break his party," said a gentleman in reply.

"He looks to me as if he was dug out of old Simpson with a crow-bar; I wonder if he isn't his son, Crane." asked a Wash- ingtonian present, by the name of Jones.

"No, he aint," snarled Crane; "he don't look no more like Simpson than a bob-tailed cur looks like a brindle ox."

"Look a here, boys! There's something damn strange any-

how, about that stable of Shirely's," broke in for the first time an old resident named Jackson. "Now I've known that feller for more than ten years, and he's allers been afeared of his shadder, and wouldn't mix in with gamblers, no how. Well, this fall he comes and tells me he's 'opened for horse, mar', or gelding,' and tells 'em all to come and play against 'em; well, you've all went agin 'em, and whar's your money? I've dropped agin them fellers eight hundred, and damn me if I hadn't rather chucked it into the river than them thieves should have it. That's my sentiments about the matter, publicly expressed."

"Don't cry for your money, Jacksey, arter you've lost it," sang out the consoling Crane.

"I cries as little fur my money as any of ye," retorted the indignant Mr. Jackson, "but when I does lose, I like to do it where I'm treated like a gentleman. What fur do they allus make that white-livered boy deal? that's what I want to know? I had to blaggard Shirley an hour the other night, to get him to make a deal fur me—'twas arter I lost five hundred, too, agin the boy—and when I did get him to make a deal fur me, only just one, why, I beat 'em out of a hundred and fifty in less than no time, and out 'o that there cheer he jumps, like a snake 'd bit him. Now what kind of doin' is that 'ere, hey?" asked Mr. Jackson, appealing to his hearers. "Now, gentlemen," he continued, with a solemn shake of the head, "I b'leeve as how them fellers are a cheating of us!"

"How ridiculous for an old experienced gambler like you to talk in that manner!" said one of his friends.

"It ain't ridiculous, no such thing, and I just b'leeve it's true, any how," exclaimed Mr. Jackson, emphatically.

"Well," returned his friend, "I'd like to find one of those cheating dealers; I'd like to know how the trick is done."

"Would you, tho'?" asked Jackson, with a sneer, "you've furgot, I reckon, when Pringle imported one 'o them 'ere fellers to Richmond, an' how he played strippers on you, 'mongst the rest on 'em?"

"No, I haven't," replied his friend, "nor have I forgotten he was damn soon caught at it and had to make tracks out 'o that, damn quick, too, and you needn't accuse Pringle, for he knew nothing about it till the scoundrel was detected."

"I'm no ways sure 'o that 'are," doggedly replied Jackson.

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gedly replied Jackson.

"Well, unless you are sure, you have no right to speak of such a thing, nor have you any right to talk of Shirley's game in the manner which you have done. I've been around their game as much as any one, and I don't think I've seen a dozen splits altogether; that don't look much like playing strippers, does it? Cotton is always in the dealing chair, you complain. They keep him there because he's lucky, and if you were interested in the game you would do the same; at least I know I should. Shirley is too scary to deal a large game of faro, and as far as Simpson is concerned, he probably knows more about a horse's foot than he does about a pack of cards."

"You can all think jist as you please, gentlemen, this 'ere's a free country," said Mr. Jackson, not the best pleased in the world that his friend should set up a defense of these parties against his declared suspicions, and the want of active sympathy shown to him by his listeners. "You can think jist as you please, but no more o' my money does them there fellers get a chance to handle. I've had enough o' their game, mind that, gentlemen!"

"You've an undoubted right to do as you please with your own money, Jackson, but you have no right to accuse any one of cheating unless you're able to prove it. Supposing now, some outsider were to hear you; they would naturally suppose if a professional gambler could be cheated at faro that they were cheated every time they lost against the bank. It won't do to wag your tongue in such a careless way, Jackson," said his friend.

"I'm glad to hear you express yourself so clearly on this point, sir," said the Major. "Gamblers, sir, are prone to give too much license to their tongues, sir, and it has never done them any good, but, on the contrary, much evil, sir."

When our visitors had left us that night, the Major said to me, "Now, Jack, you see what envy and selfishness will do. Those fellows who were abusing Simpson and his partners have no other cause for doing so than because they could not beat their bank, and because they could not, they are trying to injure the fair name of those gentlemen. Had they been successful, Mr. Simpson and his associates would, no doubt, be a 'devilish nice set of fellows, sir,' and should we be so lucky as to win any of their money, it's probable they will blackguard us in the same manner, sir."

"Well, Major, if they are willing to stand the losing, I'm willing to stand the blackguarding," I replied, smiling. "But what did the gentleman mean when he said strippers were played in some of the gambling-houses of Richmond?"

"Well, sir, it happened about a year ago in Mr. Pringle's house. A young man from Kentucky, it seems, was introduced to him by one of his friends as a good faro-dealer, besides being honest, industrious, and trustworthy. After being in the house for a month or so, he was detected in playing a pack of strippers on the players. There was a great rumpus about it at the time, but Mr. Pringle exonerated himself in the most emphatic terms: said he had no knowledge whatever of the matter, paid back every man at the table his losses, and discharged the young man."

"But what are strippers, and for what are they intended?"

"I'll tell you all about it to-morrow; I'm too fatigued to-night to do anything except to go to bed; so let's be off."

Messrs. Shirley and Simpson had called upon us a few days after we opened our bank, and gave us a play, which ended without any very important results, and, on leaving, invited us to return their call at their rooms. This invitation we did not immediately take advantage of, and it passed along a week or so, when Simpson and Cotton came together to our place and lost against the bank \$350. When they left Mr. Simpson again invited us to call on him at his faro-rooms, which we promised to do. It was, however, nearly a month before we availed ourselves of his invitation; our reason for not returning their civilities sooner being a pressure of business, which confined us strictly to our own rooms. Meanwhile, Simpson would drop in occasionally, have a glass with the Major, and talk over racing matters with him—a subject in which he was pretty well versed.

But his great delight was in telling the Major stories of his quarter-racing: how he had escaped the snares spread to entrap him, and how in every instance he out-jockeyed his adversaries. His free, open manner, his rollicking stories—which he told well—besides his knowledge of horses and racing, easily made him a favorite with the Major. The little good-natured and pleasant attentions which he paid me, and which are seldom met with from elderly people towards youths of my age, were flattering to my pride, and I naturally conceived a high opinion

and the losing, I'm willing, smiling. "But what strippers were played in and?"

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of Mr. Simpson. He had carefully refrained from pressing his invitation to call at his faro-rooms since we had so ungraciously neglected the first ones. A couple of weeks or so after the firm of Shirley, Simpson & Cotton had received such a turning over in our rooms, the Major concluded, for the first time, he would return the numerous visits of Mr. Simpson and the calls of his partners, and requested me to accompany him. We had closed our rooms for the night, it being about two o'clock, A. M., when we started across the avenue to Mr. Shirley's, to show him and his friends, as the Major expressed it, "that we were gentlemen of good breeding." We found no one in the room, which was large and neatly fitted up and furnished, but its proprietors. Cotton was seated in the dealing-chair, with his two fat legs on the lay-out. Without, in any respect, altering his position, he twisted his vague countenance into what was intended for a smile, and drawled out, "How-de-do, Major?" Of myself he took not the smallest notice, thinking, no doubt, I was the Major's young man, and not worth it.

"Well, by glory!" exclaimed Simpson, jumping from his chair and giving the Major a hug like that of a grizzly-bear. When he had squeezed him sufficiently, he turned and repeated the operation on me. "You've found out the way over here at last, have you? Well, by George, we'll have a drink on that, Major. Here, Justice, stir your stumps and let the Major and myself have a drink," said Simpson to his mulatto boy. "Let's have a bottle of champagne, Justice. We can go a bottle, eh, Major? I knew it!" he exclaimed, when the Major assented with a nod.

"How is my friend, Mr. Shirley?" inquired the Major of that gentleman, who was reclining full length on a sofa, having scarcely noticed our presence.

"Very bad, very bad indeed," he answered, in a doleful manner.

"No wonder, by George! How can a man expect to be well when you can scarcely drive him out of the house for a mouthful of fresh air?" said Simpson, addressing his conversation to the Major. "Fresh air's the stuff to keep a man alive, if he only mixes it with two or three dozen glasses of grog every day, eh, Major?—ain't that so, old cock?" asked Simpson, slapping him on the back with his open hand.

"Better than all the d—d doctor's stuff ever invented," an-

answered the Major, swallowing at the same moment the glass of wine just handed him by Justice.

When the bottle was finished, Simpson said, good-naturedly, "There, Major, is my young man at his post, ready to receive company, and I'll tell you what, ole boy, we don't get scared here at anything a man puts down to us. We're blooded stock here. That's it, blooded stock! No man shall leave this room having it to say we were afeared to turn for his money. Don't that show blood, eh, Major?"

"It does, sir! And that's the sort of gentlemen I like to gamble with, when I'm flush of money," rejoined the Major.

"Well, thar's Cotton; give 'em a hug, ole boy!"

"Not to-night, sir! I'm not in a playing humor to-night, Mr. Simpson."

"What's that got to do with it? Humor's got nothing to do with winning money when there's a chance for it. Hoist out o' there, Cotton, till I shuffle up for the Major." The latter did as he was ordered, and Simpson took the dealing chair, and a pack of cards was handed him by Cotton. When he had shuffled and boxed them, he bent over towards us and slapped his hand on the lay-out, crying out, "Here we are, ole stud! Face the music!" The Major was badgered into playing against his will; but he bought fifty dollars' worth of checks, and to keep him company I invested fifty dollars in ivory also, with the determination, if I lost that, to lose no more. But alas for the mutability of human resolutions. Where one person will make and keep such a resolution, twenty will break it, and be insidiously carried away with their first loss, and keep risking more, in the hope of regaining what they have already lost.

In two deals the Major was the winner of \$375, and I had also been fortunate enough to pick up \$140, when Simpson sprang from the chair, crying out, "Here, Cotton, I'll turn these gentlemen over to you. I don't believe I'm a good faro-dealer, nohow. Getting too old to win, eh, Major?"

"They say youngsters are luckier than old ones; but if they'd take my advice, they'd be a damn sight luckier yet, which is to let gambling alone, and follow some other business, sir!"

"That's it, Major," cried Simpson, slapping his hands forcibly together. "I've been trying to beat that into Cotton's skull ever since I've known him. But it's too infernal thick for him to see

it, so he can go to hell his own gait; ain't that sense, eh? Here, Shirley," he continued, "get off that sofa, and come and look out for Cotton; if he gets losing he couldn't see a white steer run across the table; and Justice, open another bottle o' that wine; we're getting infernal thirsty here."

Mr. Cotton, without hearing the remarks of his partner, put the pack with which he had been dealing, in the card-box, and took from it a fresh one, shuffled it up, and put it into the dealing-box. The first two or three riffles, which he gave to the cards, as he began shuffling, attracted my attention. The sound struck on my ear as harsh and unnatural. Instead of that mellow sound, which can be compared to nothing but a covey of partridges starting on the wing, which a fine pack of cards give forth, in the hands of an expert shuffler, it seemed like a rough pack of paste-board cards. No suspicion of wrong crossed my mind at that time, however. The Major lost \$400 on his deal, while I, playing small and cautious, lost \$60. Cotton again shuffled his cards, and again I listened for the unnatural sound, but this time failed to detect it, from which circumstance I concluded I had been mistaken. Several deals were made with this pack, and finally one on which the Major got even, and won, besides, \$20. Cotton now put this pack away and took a fresh one, and in the shuffling I again detected the sound which had struck so discordantly on my ear before, and on this deal the Major lost \$600, and I \$200. Two more were made with this pack, on which the Major and myself won a few hundreds, when Cotton again changed the pack, and took another one from the card-box. My ears were now on the alert to detect that singular sound, which had first surprised me, and then aroused my suspicions that some fraud was being practiced upon us. It was, I had observed, when a fresh pack was brought in, that we scarcely won a bet on a deal, and it was only on those occasions that the cards gave forth that harsh noise while being shuffled. Another feature of Cotton's dealing my keen sense of hearing had not failed to detect, as unnatural. When a card is pushed from the dealing-box, while making a turn, it glides out with a nice, fine sound, which falls on the ear pleasantly. I discovered the monotony of this sound broken in upon several times during a deal, and in place of the easy, gliding sound, the cards would issue from the box with a "cluck," as if the mouth of the box were choked; and I



observed that it was immediately subsequent to these "clucks," that our bets were picked up off the lay-out by the fat fingers of Cotton. The idea that a dealer *could* cheat his players at faro never once crossed my brain until I was in Richmond. Late one night, in our gambling-room, I heard a gambler say, when none were present but those of his own profession, that a new trick had been invented, by which a faro-dealer could cheat his players, by taking from the dealing-box two cards instead of one at a time. Also that persons were traveling around the country practicing it upon the unwary, and that the shrewdest gamblers were imposed upon by it, as well as the greenest fools. On the following morning I mentioned what I had heard to the Major, who laughed at the idea that a faro-dealer could cheat his players, and told me he had been listening to similar nonsensical stories for thirty years; but said they had no other foundation than in the cracked brains of the crazy gamblers who went about telling them. The Major's opinion on all matters pertaining to play being to me law and gospel, I thought no more on the subject until the evening when Jackson thought proper to ventilate his suspicions at our rooms, with regard to the fairness of the game kept in Shirley's house. At the same time the question of strippers came up, and their having been played at Pringle's bank in Richmond. Both subjects aroused my curiosity, which did not rest until I had made the Major explain to me the nature of strippers, and to what uses they were put. From the explanation which I then received from him, I was satisfied that Cotton was not playing strippers on us; but I felt convinced that he had a decided advantage over us, which alarmed me, and I would have taken the Major home immediately, had it been possible to do so. But he was already \$900 loser, and pretty drunk, so that I had lost all influence over him. He had divested himself of his coat and vest, and also his neckerchief, and was calling the servant to bring more wine, at least once in every deal. Simpson, after getting the game going, had stretched himself full length on the sofa, with his feet cocked in the air, and was now treating us to a most discordant tune from his nasal organs, while Shi'ey lounged half asleep in the look-out chair.

Being now firmly convinced that the stupid looking young scamp dealing was cheating us, and that he did so every time he brought into play a fresh pack of cards, I played along

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lightly, being now loser to the tune of \$450, and kept my eyes and ears open without showing him that I harbored any suspicion. He continued changing his cards more often the farther we proceeded in our play, until he only made the second deal with one pack, when he exchanged it for a fresh one. Another circumstance strongly confirmed my suspicions that he was robbing us. I noticed that several times during a deal his forefinger and thumb would press heavily against that corner of the dealing-box nearest him, and that whenever he did so, that infernal "cluck" would be heard as the cards fell from the box. Then for the first time the thought struck me to count the cards as they came from the box. I did so the next time he took a fresh pack, and found, when the deal was ended, that but forty-four cards had left the dealing-box. Without a word being spoken among us, he shuffled up the same pack, and gave us a new deal with it, on which the Major won \$550; he was still loser of about \$1400, and I was loser nearly \$600. Cotton now cast the pack aside, and took another from one of the pigeon-holes of the card-box, and shuffled; the cards, during the operation, giving forth the strange sound which first attracted my attention. I was now alive to the occasion, and determined to close his career for the present, at least on that deal. The Major, emboldened by his success on the preceding deal, commenced laying his money heavily against the bank, hoping to retrieve his losses. On the first turn out of the box he won a \$100 bet. Several more turns were made without any action having taken place, when Cotton, straightening himself in his chair, the muscles of his thumb and fore-finger, resting on the corner of the dealing-box, began to contract, and a card was shoved out; it left the mouth of the box with a cluck, and was poised between the fore-finger and thumb of Cotton's right hand; but before he had time to drop it on the pack of dealt cards, I reached across the table and snatched it from his fingers; *two cards were there, instead of one.* I separated the two cards with my finger and thumb, and held them both up before the terror-stricken face of Cotton. "That's nice work, Mr. Cotton!" I said, exultingly, shaking the two cards in his face. Speechless and dumbfounded, Cotton sat in his chair; nor could Shirley, who had started bolt upright in his the moment I snatched the cards, find a word to come to the relief of his accomplice. The Major could not understand

my behavior, and stared in speechless astonishment at me for a time, and then demanded, "What the devil" I was "about, sir?" "Nothing more nor less, Major, than that this thief has been robbing us; and here," I cried, holding up the two cards before his puzzled face, "are the proofs of his guilt." The sound of my voice, pitched in an excited key, awoke Simpson, who sprang to his feet with, "Who talks of robbing? What's the matter here?"

"I do, Mr Simpson," I said, in a quiet, but firm tone, and with a determined manner. "I have caught your dealer robbing us, and here's the two cards I snatched from his fingers, after he had passed them from the dealing-box as one," holding up the cards for his inspection.

"Nonsense! nonsense! We rob nobody, boy, here! Major, your young man's excited; do you know what the matter is with him?"

"He says we've been swindled, sir, and if I find it's true, look out for yourself, sir," replied the irate Major.

"Now, Major, be easy; you're a sensible man, and can listen to reason. Mr. Cotton, explain this matter! I wouldn't have a misunderstanding with my friend, Major Jenks, for all the damned money in Washington. Pray explain matters, Mr. Cotton!"

Cotton, thus adjured, still laboring under great agitation, could barely stammer out, "There's n-n-nothing the matter, sir, only the mouth of the dealing-box is too open for the cards, and two slipped out instead of one, an' he there," pointing to me, "thinks as how there's somethink wrong, that's all the matter, sir."

"My dear Major, I see it all! It's only a mere accident. You know, yourself, that cards will frequently slip out of a box when the mouth is a little too open, or the cards a little too thin. It's nothing more nor less, I assure you, gentlemen," explained Mr. Simpson.

"I'm not to be put off with any such explanation, Mr. Simpson," I replied.

"But, my young friend, what good would it do the bank, to drop two cards instead of one, or even five, hey?"

"I don't know," I rejoined, "but that's precisely what I mean to find out;" and, suiting the action to the word, I reached over and seized hold of the dealing-box and the cards.

"Stop, sir! We don't allow any one to meddle with our tools," cried Simpson, advancing to take the things from me. But before he could accomplish his purpose, the muzzle of a cocked pistol was staring him in the face. My action was so unexpected, that, for a moment, he staggered back against the Major, crying out, "Do you want to murder me, you infernal assassin?"

"Yes, I do, if you interfere with me here," I said, in a menacing manner.

"Don't, for God's sake, Jack, do anything rash!" ejaculated the Major.

Finding now that I had matters pretty much my own way, and feeling no way disposed to give up my advantages, I calmly seated myself at the end of the faro-table, and proceeded to examine the cards, Simpson and his partners standing on the floor in front of me, the latter not daring to put in half a word, let alone a whole one. I placed my pistol on the table before me, and took up the cards and leveled them side-ways on the table, and then inspected the sides and the ends of the pack. I discovered that one side had been trimmed slightly; that is, that it had a serrated appearance. I separated the narrow cards from the full ones, that is, those which had been trimmed from those which had not been, and I then discovered that one-half the cards had been slightly trimmed near the corners on one of the sides only, while the other half of the pack remained untouched. I found, on close inspection, that the trimmed cards were roughed, by some process, on their faces, and the untrimmed ones were roughed on their backs; by placing the untrimmed cards upon the trimmed ones, they adhered so closely as to appear but a single card, and could not be separated until spread apart by the fingers and thumbs. Simpson, notwithstanding the cocked pistol at my side, did not permit me to pursue my investigations in peace. He insisted that I should restore to him the dealing-box and cards, and repeatedly informed me he was not to be brow-beaten in this manner in his own house. But by this time the Major had become somewhat sobered up, and warned him that any interference from him would result in his receiving a hickory cane over his head, in no very gentle manner. "But this is an infernal outrage, Major, and I'm not a going to put up with it, damn me if I am, sir."

"He must examine those cards; he's lost his money against them, and he has a right to know how he's lost it, sir."

"I say he ain't no right to grab a man's cards that way, and by God he shan't do it in my horse neither, recollect that, Major Jenks!"

Cotton and Shirley now for the first began to display a little courage and bluster. The former told Simpson to send the boy for a policeman, accompanying his advice with the remark that things had come to a pretty pass, when a man was to be robbed in his own house. Without paying any attention to their threats or bluster, I pitched a card from my hand to the table, then another, and another, all of which fell as a single card. I then picked up each card, pressed it between my thumb and finger, when it separated into two cards. "These cards, Major," I said, "are made to adhere together, in order that two may be forced from the box at once. They are stocked in advance; the trimmed cards are all nines, tens, jacks and trays, fours and fives. The untrimmed ones are the aces, deuces, kings, queens, eights, sevens, and sixes. By shoving two cards from the box at once, one of these denominations will always win, while the others will as invariably lose. Now, Major, you see how they've been robbing us to-night!"

"It's a damned lie! You've not been robbed, and you only say so because you don't want to give up the money you've lost fairly," cried Simpson.

Without making him any reply, I sprang over the table, opened the card-box where the money was, every cent of which came from our pockets, and conveyed it back whence at least some of it came, viz., my own pocket, no attempt being made to interfere with me.

"I'll have you arrested for robbery!" roared Simpson.

"Will you, though?" I answered with a sneer; "and I'll have the three of you in the penitentiary for swindling, and here's my proof," I cried, holding up the cards and dealing-box.

"Major, do you countenance such robbery as this?" appealed Mr. Simpson.

"I'll show you whether I do or not. Jack, run to the window and cry 'police' as loud as you can. Damn me if I don't have this matter settled by the proper authorities, sir." This movement on the part of the Major was a stunner. Simpson believed him to be terribly in earnest, and surrendered at discretion. He was the only one of the firm that had shown any courage in a

bad cause, but the idea of public exposure was more than he could stand. Not that he was afraid of the law—he was well aware that there was no law to punish him for swindling at cards; but he had already done too much swindling in Washington, and exposure would drive him from it, and brand him as a sharper wherever he went. Besides, it might bring down on him the vengeance of some of his victims before he could get beyond their reach. I had started for the window in pursuance of the Major's command, when I was arrested by the voice of Simpson calling out, "Hold on, young man; I reckon we can settle our little difficulties without calling in the police, don't you, Major, eh?"

"Yes, sir, we can, on one condition, which is, that you acknowledge that we were swindled, and are entitled to have our money back. And unless you do so, I shall place this matter in the hands of justice. Do you accede to my terms, sir?" demanded the Major, bringing his cane down on the floor.

I was afraid the old fellow was pushing matters a little too strong; I wanted only to get our money, and leave the place as quietly as possible. I felt immeasurably relieved when Simpson, instead of rejecting the terms indignantly, as I fully expected he would, only said, in a deprecating manner, "Well, well, Major, let's take a drink on it, all 'round, and let by-gones be by-gones."

"No, sir, I'm damned if I do," said the Major.

"Yes you will, too, Major," I broke in; "let's have no more hard feelings about this affair, but forget it and take a drink with Mr. Simpson."

"No, sir! I'm damned if I do," reiterated the Major, bringing down his cane with an emphatic thump on the floor. "I'm afraid his liquor would poison me, sir!"

"You've taken many a dose of it this evening, Major, and you ain't dead yet," said Simpson, laughing. "But come, let us shake hands and be friends. You can't make no money by bearing malice; come, give us your hand, man," entreated Simpson, holding out his own.

"No, sir! I never take the hand of a thief, if I know him to be one." Then, turning to me, said, "Jack, let's get out of this infernal den!" We were soon in the street and on our way home. It was not till I reached my room that I discovered that I had in my pocket the cards and dealing-box which I had

taken from Cotton. My first impulse was to take it back; but I reflected that I was not sufficiently acquainted with the workings of the box and cards, and was very desirous of being better versed in their mysteries. I concluded I would wait until next day, when I would restore both to their owners. The next evening some of our patrons reported that the rooms of Mr. Shirley were closed, and no lights to be seen about the premises. On the following day I ascertained that the furniture had been removed, secretly, no one knew whither; the proprietors were not visible, nor could any one tell where they might be found. For several months their sudden and mysterious departure was the subject of much speculation among the sporting fraternity of Washington city, but none were made any wiser by either the Major or myself.

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## CHAPTER XV.

### INVENTORS.

The person who first conceived the idea of ironing a shirt was a genius, and the first ship-builder was a benefactor to his race. So says Voltaire, at least, and he was a good judge. We have long been proudly enjoying ironed shirts, and the convenience of ships, without knowing or in the least caring to inquire to whom we are indebted for these blessings. The inventions of mankind to supply our wants and minister to our pleasures have been many and various, and, in the majority of cases, those who spent years in elaborating them are lost to human memory. Many a poor wretch has consumed the best years of his life in trying to produce something which would be useful to his fellow-men, and has gone down to his grave without meeting with even a cold acknowledgment of his labors—a ruined, disappointed man; while another, more fortunate, would seize upon his invention and enrich himself. The origin of many of the arts is lost in the darkness of ages. In the vast empire of China, even, at the present day, the hand of the man of genius is paralyzed by the thought that his efforts will remain entirely unknown. The same want of respect was shown to inventors, with the exception of the Greeks and Romans, by all the nations of antiquity. The

pyramids of Egypt have outlasted the names of their designers. That stupendous monument of human skill, the great wall of China, one thousand five hundred miles in length, thirty feet high, and fifteen feet thick on the top, has outlived two thousand centuries; but the name of the man who first conceived the grand idea of building it is unknown. The names of cut-throat warriors and stupid princes are ever carefully preserved in the archives of nations, but the man who invents a life or labor saving machine is left to die unhonored and unsung. It is only within the last two centuries or so that the inventor's talents have been properly appreciated and acknowledged among Christian nations, and a century has not elapsed since they have been benefited peculiarly in any proper degree, by the productions of their brains. At the present day a new novel, drama, picture, poem, or opera, will electrify a whole nation of people until they become tired of it, when they will toss the production aside like a child the toy which no longer pleases its fancy. Change and amusement, or, I might say, change of amusement, is as necessary to mankind as the food we eat or the air we breathe. And in these days whoever brings forth something novel to instruct or amuse, (but particularly the latter) or lessen the labors of his race, peans will be shouted in his praise, every lip will repeat his name, and wealth will be showered upon him; and, when ready for planting, the press will vie with each other in giving him an obituary.

After the above learned disquisition, I will come to my subject. Card-playing has from time immemorial contributed to the enjoyment of the people. We are told by some writers that cards were invented by one Jaquin Gringonneur for the amusement of his mad prince (Charles VII. of France); but it is probable that this assertion of history, like many another one, is a mistake. We find mentioned that John I., of Castile, in 1383, prohibited the use of cards throughout his dominions, by an edict. It is believed by many students of history that cards were known in India and China long before the Christian era. Nothing produced by the brains of man has offered so many and various kinds of amusements as cards, or been so lasting. Many games formerly played with them are entirely forgotten, others obsolete, and new ones have been invented to fill their places; goods and money, cattle and horses, houses and lands, have changed hands on the issue of these games, and will con-



tinue to do so as long as cards are in existence; still, the name of the inventor of a single one of these is unknown to us. Is it because their creations were of no practical benefit to mankind? Why, then, neither were Hamlet, Ivanhoe, The Corsair, Norma, and many other works, the names of whose authors will live through succeeding ages. These productions only serve to amuse our leisure, and many of our games of chance display quite as much genius—of a different sort, certainly, but still genius—in their conception, as any of these charming compositions. The game of chess is one of the grandest efforts of the human mind; for complexity and dexterity, it far surpasses any known game. Men have spent a life-time, from buoyant youth to driveling age, poring over some of its moves, without having been able to master them satisfactorily to themselves. Thousands of persons have for a life-time pursued their favorite pastime of whist, without perhaps a single person in those thousands comprehending the different combinations of hands which may appear at a whist table, or the most skillful manner of playing them, to insure success. Mathematics, mechanics, and astronomy can be mastered by study, as well as their like sciences. Why not, then, as easily, the movements on a chess-board, or the different combinations of various hands at whist and other games played with cards?

The inventor of a game of hazard should be well posted up in the doctrine of chances; inasmuch as that, should his creation deviate in any respect from the law of fairness, it would be false. Our country has been prolific of inventors, from railroads and telegraphs down to matches and patent medicines, but as yet none have invented a game played with cards; that is, a fair, square, honest game, acknowledged and adopted as such. But if we have been deficient in creating games of hazard, we have not been wanting as far as altering them to suit our own purposes are concerned. Our country for many years has been prolific in such geniuses. It is a prevalent opinion among foreigners that our country produces the most scientific gamblers in the world. Such, however, is not the case. The gamblers of Mexico and the South American nations, and also those of Europe, are equally skillful in their profession; and the sharpers of Europe, if anything, surpass those of our country in their manipulations of cards, dice, etc. It is our inventive powers which

have caused foreigners to have so high an opinion of our gambling talent. Nearly every banking game of chance which has been introduced into this country has been perverted from its original fairness, in order that the percentage might be more favorable to the bankers, or, what is worse, to place them so entirely in the hands of sharpers that they can bid defiance to fortune whenever they have for adversaries men having more money than brains. As faro has in this country more play against it than all the other banking games combined, sharpers have for the last fifty years concentrated on it their talents, for the purpose of devising cunning schemes for swindling both the dealer and the player; and I shall now make it my business to examine how far they have succeeded.

## FARO-BOXES.

In describing the game of faro I stated that, previous to the introduction of these boxes, it was customary for the dealer to hold the pack of cards face downward, while he turned over with his right hand a card from the top of the pack. This was the player's card; he then turned over another, which was for the bank, and kept on doing so until the pack was exhausted. This method frequently placed the bank at the mercy of shrewd and keen-eyed men; a blotch, bend, or scratch on a card would be sufficient to give them a very decided advantage over the bank, and cause it heavy loss. To guard against such accidents, faro-boxes were introduced, and it is said were invented in the year 1822, by a Virginian by the name of Major Bayley. The box which he invented, however, was a clumsy affair; it was wider than it was long, and was covered over on the top, except an oblong hole in the middle, just large enough to push the top card from the box with a single finger. The cards rested in the box back upwards, and were dealt from it in the same manner as when the dealer held the cards in his hand. These boxes were not favorably received, and were viewed with suspicion by players, more on account of their hiding the cards than anything else. The licensed gambling-houses in New Orleans would not use them, nor were they received with any more favor in the Northern States. They were used, however, in some parts of the country until replaced by open boxes. In or about the year

1825, an unrivaled genius, by the name of Graves, a watchmaker in Cincinnati, invented the open dealing-box, similar to those in use at the present time, though since then many improvements have been made. Following on the heels of his faro-box invention, his prolific brain discovered a method of cheating the players with his boxes by a cunningly devised arrangement known to the sharpers of early days as "gaff."

#### G A F F.

This trick was played in the following manner: The plate covering the mouth of the box was very thin and flexible, so as to give upwards, if desirable, to force two cards from the box at once. The next thing required was a pack of cards that could be stocked to suit the chances of the manipulator. This was accomplished by trimming the cards of different denominations in convex and concave shapes. For example: the kings, queens, aces and deuces were separated from the others; these were trimmed by a convex plate made for the purpose, while the remainder of the pack were trimmed with a concave plate. The pack being now ready for use, the manipulator shuffles it thoroughly, in the usual manner, then strips it in the following fashion: He holds one end of the pack between the fingers and thumb of his left hand, while the other end is resting on the table; he places the fingers and thumb of his right hand on the sides of the pack, at the middle, which makes them rest on the convex cards. He then draws the pack apart with a quick jerk, which leaves the concave cards in his left hand and the convex in his right; these he throws upon the top of the pack, which leaves it ready for stocking. This was formerly done in the following manner: While holding the pack above the table firmly in the fingers and thumb of the left hand, he "milks it down" with the thumb and fingers of his right hand; that is, he draws a card from the bottom of the pack and one from the top at the same time, and continues to do so until he has "milked" off fifty-two cards, making a concave card and a convex one fall alternately together, which completes the stock. He then cuts the pack and puts it in the dealing-box. If a king, queen, ace, or deuce (the convex cards) are seen on the top in the dealing-box, or at any time during the deal after a turn is made, the manipulator will know that all

Graves, a watchman-box, similar to those when many improve-neels of his faro-box method of cheating the devised arrangement ff."

manner: The plate in and flexible, so as cards from the box at of cards that could be or. This was accom-nominations in convex ings, queens, aces and ese were trimmed by the remainder of the The pack being now oroughly, in the usual shion: He holds one numb of his left hand, ; he places the fingers of the pack, at the vev cards. He then which leaves the con-k in his right; these he aves it ready for stock-owing manner: While the fingers and thumb the thumb and fingers ard from the bottom of e time, and continues y-two cards, making a rnately together, which ack and puts it in the ence (the convex cards) r at any time during the ator will know that all

those cards will win. Should it be for his interest to change the stock, he shoves two cards from the box at once and the kings, queens, aces and deuces will all come losing, and whenever he wishes them to come winning again he accomplishes his purpose by pushing two more cards through the box, in place of one. This is done in the following manner: Hidden underneath one of the fingers of his left hand, the manipulator holds his "gaff," a small pointed instrument about a quarter of an inch in length and the size of a small darning-needle, shaped like the point of a shoemaker's awl. This instrument is usually attached to a gold ring worn by the operator on one of his fingers—the box being purposely constructed to enable him to see the sides of the cards opposite the mouth. Whenever he wants to change his stock he places the point of his "gaff" against the side of the second card, that is, the one beneath the top, and by pushing it gently he forces it and the top card through the mouth of the box at once, when both are seized by the fingers of the right hand and placed upon the dealt cards.

I have serious doubts if any of the great army of fools in this country, at least those among them who understand the rudiments of faro-playing, would submit to such a barefaced robbery at the present time; but when Graves first invented this trick, and for many years afterwards, sharpers worked it successfully, and by it made untold money.

The convex strippers were also played successfully for many years, at games of single-handed poker. The cards intended for this purpose were all cut concave, except ten, viz., the aces and kings, with a queen and a Jack, which were cut convex. When the sharper's antagonist had shuffled the cards preparatory to a deal, and passed them over to be cut, the sharper gave them one or more shuffles, and as a cut stripped the convex cards from the concave ones, and placed them on the top of the pack, when the hands were dealt off, he could tell by his own hand whether his partner had the best cards or not. If in his hand he held three kings, he knew his adversary must hold as much as three aces; and if he held two pairs, kings, and aces, with a Jack, he knew he must have kings, and aces, and a queen.

A year or two subsequent to the invention of Graves' "gaff" trick, a genius named Savage, living in Virginia, invented a method of cheating players with the Bayley boxes. The cards

used for this purpose were concave and convex strippers, which were worked in the same manner as I have just described. The pack of cards being placed in the box, with their faces upwards, the fraud was worked precisely in the same manner as that described, with the exception of the "gaff." This was done away with, and in its place the two cards were forced from the box with a lever which rested against their sides, opposite the mouth of the box. This lever was hidden beneath the top covering of the box, and was worked by a very small crank. Turning the crank in one direction, it shoved the lever forward, and with it the two topmost cards from the mouth of the box, when they were immediately caught by the thumb and fore-finger of the dealer, and placed on one of the piles of dealt cards. The crank was now turned backwards, and the lever thereby drawn into its natural position. From the crank by which the lever was worked, this invention was christened the "coffee-mill." The whole affair was a clumsy invention, however, and was soon detected. It was subsequently improved upon by Graves. The crank, lever, and two cards were discarded. He made the boxes less ungainly in appearance, widened the hole in the top of the box, and, by a cunningly devised piece of machinery placed near the opening which admitted the pack, and beneath the covering of the box, the top card was held back, and that immediately beneath it shoved out. The pack, all of which were marked upon their backs, were placed in the box back upwards, and the game was dealt in the manner which was customary before the invention of boxes. When the operator saw a card which he knew would win a large stake for the player, he held it back, while his fingers covered the hole to hide it from observation, and shoved out that immediately underneath it, which he placed upon the player's pile, while the top card legitimately belonging to the player was cast in favor of the bank. This fraud could be practiced on every turn made during a deal, without the least bungling or danger of detection. This pattern of boxes, first invented by Bayley, from the time of Graves' improvement received the poetical name of the "horse box." It was one of the most ingenious contrivances ever invented for cheating the player at faro. But the ungainly shape of the box, the fact of its hiding the cards from the player, surrounded it with suspicion, and it could never be used with any success where faro-games were

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 up to the present day, but have not been used in faro for nearly  
 twenty-five years, and at the present day are used only by a set  
 of sharpers, for dealing a swindling game known as "Red and  
 Black."

The open boxes (square ones) invented by Graves became very  
 popular with both dealers and players throughout the country,  
 and within three years after their introduction, were in use in  
 every respectable faro-bank in the United States. The "gaff"  
 arrangement had by this time been exposed to the more initiated  
 among the gambling fraternity, as were also the "coffee-mill"  
 and the "horse's box." Fools might now and then be found  
 who would allow themselves to be fleeced of their money by such  
 coarse tricks, but it required something more scientific to be  
 brought forward, in order to reach the professional moneyed  
 gamblers. The prolific brain of Graves in the year 1828 discov-  
 ered what are known as roughed cards, and which have held  
 undisputed sway with sharpers over every other invention of  
 the sort, up to the present time. The boxes, prepared to drop  
 two of the roughed cards together, were precisely similar in  
 shape and appearance to the square ones; the top plate, above  
 the mouth of the box, being made to raise sufficiently to allow of  
 two cards being forced from the aperture at a time. This was  
 accomplished by a lever placed inside the box near the lid, which  
 was worked by one of the screws that fastened down the top of  
 the box. It was placed on the outside corner of the box next its  
 opening, and on the end next the dealer. Whenever the manip-  
 ulator desired to change his stock, by taking out two cards in  
 the place of one, he pressed lightly downward on the screw with  
 his thumb, which forced the lever to raise the lid of the box from  
 its mouth, which, being enlarged, he pushed, in the ordinary way,  
 the top card with his finger, but the card pushed out drags with  
 it the one immediately underneath it, and so long as his thumb  
 continues to press on the screw, so long will two cards pass from  
 the box at once; but immediately he ceases to press on the screw  
 the lid of the box resumes its natural position, and but a single  
 card can escape at a time. Since this invention these two-card  
 boxes have undergone many changes and many improvements.  
 Many men, in different parts of the country, have at various  
 times made themselves fortunes manufacturing these two-card

boxes. Whoever was able to add to them any improvement could receive for it his own price from sharpers. The material in any of these two-card boxes scarcely amounts to \$25, yet the makers have received for them from \$75 to \$300 each, according to the fineness of the workmanship. There was living in Petersburg, Va., long before the commencement of our civil war, a drunken old watchmaker who was skilled in the manufacture of these articles, who never made one for less than \$200, and had always on hand more orders than he could possibly fill. But the number of artisans who are able to construct these boxes have very much increased since the war, so much so that they have fallen greatly in price, to the immense satisfaction of the sharpers. At the present day the best silver two-card boxes can be purchased for \$100, and from that down to \$30, if not less, according to the material and workmanship. The machinery used at the present day in these cheating boxes is placed on a silver or German silver plate, and is fitted against the side of the box, beneath its mouth, which is made wide enough to admit of the passage of two cards at a time. But a small, thin plate, extending from one end of the mouth to the other, prevents the egress of more than one card, if that only is desired. This plate is attached to the machinery hidden between the side of the box and the false plate, and can be lowered to the thickness of a single card if the manipulator desires to change his stock, by taking a brace of cards from the box instead of one. At the present time the lever which works the plate is attached to one of the bars at the bottom, on the inside of the box, by which its springs are fastened. By pressing with the finger against the bar, the plate which guards the mouth of the box is lowered; the moment the finger is removed the plate resumes its natural position, and the mouth is closed against the egress of more than one card at a time. These boxes are constructed to lock in various ways; that is, to close the machinery from working, and from the sight of the uninitiated; the object of this being to enable the box to be shown to any person doubting its fairness. The precaution is superfluous, however, as no fool capable of being imposed on by a two-card box, would ever think of searching for its machinery, more especially as, if he suspected fraud, he could detect it by examining the cards. I shall now return to the roughed cards invented by Mr. Graves for the use of his boxes.

## ROUGHED CARDS OR "STRIPPERS."

I am unable to say who was the inventor of these, but they made their appearance shortly before Graves brought forth his last and most famous invention, and were no more than an improvement on the concave and convex cards or "strippers." The labor on a pack of concave or convex "strippers" was far more than that upon "wedge strippers," of which I now propose to treat. A pack of "wedge strippers" are manufactured by trimming all the cards in the following manner: Each card is trimmed lengthwise, on one side, leaving the corner where the shaving away is commenced, intact; it is continued more heavily to the other end, which takes from the card a long and very thin wedge, and also makes the pack slightly that shape. While retaining this position the cards would be useless to the sharper for cheating purposes. But turn a portion of them so that the untrimmed ends of this portion would meet with the trimmed ends of those remaining stationary, and these respective portions could be drawn apart by taking hold of the ends of the pack. This operation is known among sharpers as "stripping." To render the pack of "strippers" serviceable we will suppose that the pack has just been trimmed into the foregoing shape: It is now divided into two piles; in one are placed the kings, queens, Jacks, aces, deuces, trois, and two sevens, and in the other the tens, nines, eights, sixes, fives, fours, and the two remaining sevens. The two piles are turned half-way round and placed one upon the other. The operator takes hold of the pack, while shuffling it, at both ends near the corners, and when he has mixed it to his satisfaction, or that of his customers, rather, he "strips" it, leaving in one part all the kings, queens, Jacks, aces, deuces, trois, and two sevens, and in the other the remainder of the cards. It was in this way sharpers first used "strippers," in order to increase the number of splits in their games, which would render the number five times greater than in the ordinary course of things, with a fair pack of cards, during a deal. They were also found useful in another way: whenever the sharpers found out or more were playing in the pot, or betting on any other particular cards, these cards were turned round from the rest in the pack, and when "stripped" and "milked down," by cutting the pack at one end, the stocked cards would all lose, but after they



were placed in the box the manipulator had then no further control over them; but the renowned Graves overcame this difficulty, first by his invention of the "gaff," and afterwards by his "roughed cards."

#### SANDED CARDS.

Simple as roughed cards may sound to the reader, when understood they are by no means so simple. They have been and are the cause of much grief and sorrow to thousands of persons. To work a pack of cards in a two-card box according to the method invented by Graves, the principle of which is carried out at the present day, is accomplished in the following manner. For example, we will take a pack of "strippers," and after separating them by drawing them apart, leave in one of the portions the king, queen, etc., as already described, and in the other, the tens, nines, eights, sixes, fives, fours, and two sevens. Having rubbed the faces of these latter ones with sand-paper, we will proceed to rub the backs of the first mentioned portion in exactly the same manner. We will now place them together and shuffle them up, after which we will "strip" them and "milk" them down, cut them, and finally place them in the dealing-box. We will suppose the ace is the soda card. This indicates that all the kings, queens, aces, deuces, trois, and the two sevens will win, and that the remaining cards will lose. As the latter denominations are sanded on their faces, and the former on their backs, they will naturally adhere; that is, the cards which are sanded upon their faces, coming in contact with those sanded upon their backs, will adhere to them. Now just as long as we wish the kings, queens, aces, deuces, trois, and, we will say, two red sevens, to win, we have only to push one card from the dealing-box at a time; but should we wish to alter the stock, we have only to touch the lever moving the plate that guards the mouth of the box, and at the same time shove the top card from the box with the forefinger, and it will drag the one immediately beneath it along with it, and the two cards will leave the mouth of the box as one only. The consequence of taking these two cards at one time is to alter the run of the whole stock. The kings, queens, Jacks, etc., will now all lose, and the tens, nines, eights, etc., will all win; and as often as two cards are taken at once, the whole programme of the "stock" will be

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changed. Should an obstinate player persist in following up the run of the winning cards, that is, if he bet his money behind the deuce, ace, etc., these being the winning cards, we should be obliged to take two cards from the box at once, in order that we might win his bet, and so on, as often as he bet on winning cards.

About twenty-five years ago an improvement was introduced, to relieve the dealer from taking two cards too often during a deal, and also to enable him the more readily to beat two or more players at the same time. This was accomplished by placing a small dot on the faces of those cards whose backs were sanded. This dot was placed on the margin of the card near the left-hand corner next the dealer, and was made in such a manner that the operator could tell whether the card on which it was placed was a king, queen ace, deuce, trois, or seven. The inside corner of the top of the box on the left-hand side, next the dealer, was filed away so that he could see the dots; and as the top card dragged with it the one under it, the plate thus doctored enabled the dealer to see the dot on the third card below. In this way he could tell before he made his last turn which was the winning card. By this cunning device a player, we will say, has \$100 bet on the ace and the same on the ten. According to the stock the ace must win, and the ten lose. The manipulator makes his turns regularly, knowing the ten will lose before the dot on the card below informs him that the ace will win, on the turn. Should the latter prove to be the case, he pushes two cards through the mouth of the box, which makes the ace lose on the turn. If the ten does not win on the same turn on which the ace has lost, on the next turn he pushes two cards more from the box, again placing the ten a loser. Strippers in various shapes have held their own up to the present time. It was natural that in the course of time these frauds should be exposed to the farther advanced of the gamblers, and such was the case, and it required some new invention in the line of fraud to cheat them. Upon this class, stripping cards and milking them were worn out; and though such tricks might still answer for the verdant, some new scheme had to be elaborated to baffle the already awakened vigilance of professional gamblers. This was accomplished in the year 1835, when a new invention was set afloat, known among gamblers under the name of

## "ROUNDS"

I am unable to say by whom these were invented. The credit is generally awarded to a genius living in Nashville, Tenn., by the name of John Powers. A pack of rounds were manufactured as follows: the kings, queens, aces, deuces, trois, and red sevens were taken from the pack, and the tens, nines, eights, sixes, fives, fours, and black sevens were trimmed in this way: On each of their sides, near the corners, a slice about the width of the thickness of two cards was trimmed off, while the middle was left untouched; this gave them a slightly oval shape; each of these cards were sanded on their faces, and those of the other portion on their backs. When the trimmed and untrimmed cards were placed together, the pack on one side had a serrated appearance, especially near its corners, while on the other side the natural shape was preserved. The reader can now easily understand how, by separating the trimmed from the untrimmed cards, and "milking them down," the whole pack was completely stocked. The dealer, while shuffling a pack of "rounds," kept the serrated or trimmed side next him, and held the pack near the corners with his thumbs resting on the trimmed part, and on the sides of those which were untrimmed. The trimmed cards held their natural position during the shuffle, the thumbs being unable to touch them; the sand on the faces of the trimmed ones meeting the roughed backs of the untrimmed ones, they were held firmly in their places, so that a practical shuffler could shuffle a pack of rounds for more than a minute, with seeming fairness, without in any manner disarranging his stock. The shuffling of a pack of these cards has a very different sound from that of a fair pack—it falls roughly on the ear; so much so, that, in many cases, it has led to their detection. Rounds and strippers of all descriptions have had their stocks arranged in different ways. When the cards are placed in opposition as follows: tens, nines, eights, sixes, fives, fours, and two sevens against the kings, queens, Jacks, aces, deuces, trois, and two sevens, they are termed "one end against the other." When they are placed in opposition as kings, queens, aces, deuces, sixes, eights, and two red sevens, against the Jacks, tens, nines, fives, fours, trois, and two black sevens, they are termed "both ends against the middle." When all the odd

cards are placed in opposition to all the even cards, they are termed "odds and evens." Cheating packs have been arranged in many different ways, but the three combinations given above are those which have been most commonly in use since "strippers" and "rounds" were invented. These variations were made to prevent players from noticing the cards running one way. When rounds were first invented, they were not intended to strip, nor was it meant that they should be separated and milked down in the presence of players. Such work would not for a moment stand the test with gamblers. Consequently the manipulators carried with them in their card-boxes, ready stocked, from one to three dozen packs of cards. In the first deal the players were robbed, and in every subsequent one, when a fresh pack was brought into play.

When rounds were played out on gamblers, but not until they had been robbed, from Maine to Texas, with them, the sharpers made strippers of their cards, that one pack of them might be serviceable every deal. One half the pack were trimmed on both sides near the corners, and the other half were made concave at the middle, which made the pack both strippers and rounds. These were christened by the sharpers, "snow-outs." The frequent scorchings which gamblers received from these gentry made them suspicious of all faro-dealers. They imagined that if, before shuffling, the cards were snowed out, that is, scattered over the table, it would be a safeguard against fraud. To meet this fallacy, rounds and strippers were brought into play combined. A skillful manipulator would shuffle them for several minutes, then strip them with a quick, easy motion, as if he were dividing the pack with both hands to shuffle in again. But no sooner had he stripped the pack, than he held it up by the sides between the thumb and fingers of his left hand, while with his right he drew a card from top and bottom, simultaneously. In this manner, with a rapid motion, he would toss the cards all over the table, and then arrange them in their natural shape; that is, the shape it was intended they should come in. While scattering the cards, he would throw those sanded upon their faces upon those roughened upon their backs; they would of course adhere, and in this fashion the whole pack was completely stocked. To give the matter an additional appearance of fairness, he now gathers up his cards, arranges them into the

pack, and shuffles them for several seconds by the trimmed edges, without disturbing, in the least, his stock, puts his cards into the dealing-box, and is ready to take two cards from it any time it suits him to do so during the deal. For more than a year this game was played on the shrewdest gamblers before it was exposed, and even up to the present time "snow-outs" have been the main dependence of scores of sharpers who use them in all their "skinning games" at faro. But they no longer "milk down," or "snow out" their cards as formerly. That method was abandoned some twenty-five years ago, for a more artful improvement. The manipulator now shuffles his foul cards carefully at the start, then rapidly strips them apart, holding in each hand one-half of the pack; the ends of these he places together, then shoves the cards between each other, placing each card of the different combinations alternately together, as correctly as if the pack had been carefully "milked down." This scientific feat is called by sharpers the "butt-in shuffle," and can be accomplished only after much practice. The first rounds introduced, those not intended to strip, were played for upwards of three years on some of the most expert faro-players in the country before they were detected. Their detection was the primal cause, or one of the causes, which forced illiberal faro-bankers to allow the keeping of cases at their games. It was upon these rounds which Mr. Cotton exercised his dexterity on the Major and myself, in Washington. Had I been at the time acquainted with roughed cards, he could not have played the second deal upon us after my suspicions were aroused. When once shown the nature of roughed cards, they are easily detected. By holding a card to the light, in such a manner that its glare may fall on its surface, should it be rubbed with sand-paper, soiled with acid, or in any manner blotched, it can be easily seen.

Strippers and rounds of every description now became worthless for robbing gamblers out of their money any farther. They had now learned to suspect all faro-dealers, and one of them could not make a deal with a pack of cards till some of the players had carefully examined it to see that it was not trimmed for purpose of fraud. Skillful sharpers, however, overcame this difficulty. They brought a new fraud to bear upon their players, which they named "squared sights." This took place in 1848. The cards were perfectly squared, so as to stand the test

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of the closest examination; for example, we will say the following cards, kings, queens, aces, and deuces, are sanded upon their backs, and all the other cards in the pack are sanded upon their faces; the cards sanded upon their backs are dotted after the same manner I have before described the rounds to be, and are intended to work in a two-card dealing-box, in precisely the same manner. The pack being examined and pronounced satisfactory, the dealer puts it, after shuffling it fairly and squarely, into the dealing-box. There has been no stripping and stacking, consequently, why should not everything be fair and square? But it is not. It is all a fraud. I have stated that the kings, queens, aces, and deuces were sanded on their backs, and dotted on their faces near the margin of their sides. Whenever a turn is made, and one of these cards remains in the box, that is, has won on the turn, and a card sanded on its face lies next to it, it drags it forward against the plate in the mouth of the box, providing the third card is also sanded upon its back. In that case the dealer can tell by the dot upon it what that card is. Should it be loaded with money, he immediately pushes two cards from the box, in order that this third card may fall for the bank on the turn, and keeps on doing so on the occurrence of every similar circumstance during the deal. The introduction of cue-boxes rendered this trick harmless, and prevented it from being played on any but fools, and at the present day it is not practiced by sharpers.

When case-keeping was introduced, the old tricks practiced upon faro-players by sharpers became useless, except in the case of the most verdant fools; but the same introduction enabled the noble army of the Chevalliers d'Industrie to concoct a new scheme for robbing those who staked their money on that game. The bankers were as yet too benighted to adopt the copper game, and the players against their bank were either compelled to bet that case-cards would win, or run the risk of having their money split on double cards. The invention now brought on the tapis was what the sharpers termed "tie-ups." "Tie-ups" were sometimes as many as nine cards, stocked so as to make the last four cases in the box lose. These nine cards were each pierced near the corners with a very fine needle. Through these holes was passed a fine hair, and tied. In the hands of a practiced operator, these cards were shuffled with every appearance

of fairness; so much so, that for about five years they were played on the most astute gamesters in the country. When the operator had managed his shuffle, he cut off the pack above the tied-up cards, which placed them at the bottom. While placing the cards in the dealing-box, he cut the hair on the sharp edge of the plate inside the box, which was sharpened for that purpose. He had now four case-cards to lose on the last four turns of the deal, and it is upon these turns that gamblers generally play their heaviest bets during a deal. Therefore one may easily see how beneficial was this artful trick to the pockets of the sharpers. The introduction of copper-betting at faro destroyed for these gentry all use of their "tie-ups." Their inventions are, however, swifter than the detection of their frauds.

One would imagine that, after the introduction of case-boards, cue-papers, and copper-betting, the votaries of faro would have been free from any further frauds being practiced upon them at their game. Every card coming from the dealing-box was duly scored, and if fifty-two cards left the box, all must be on the square. Cards, preparatory to having a deal made with them, could be taken from the box when desired, and examined, and if found perfectly square upon their sides and ends, and not sanded or roughed, how was it possible to cheat with them? A genius from Nashville completely knocked this argument out of the ring, by the invention known as the "odd card." This new device, which made its appearance about the year 1850, has lasted up to the present time, and has been successfully played on many of the gambling community, who no doubt imagined that the idea of any one cheating them at faro was beyond the range of probability.

The "odd card" is the introduction of an extra card into the pack; for example, we will say that the extra card is the deuce of spades. It and the deuce of spades belonging to the pack are roughed upon their faces with sand-paper, no other cards in the pack being so roughed but them, all the others being roughed upon their backs with sand-paper. The two deuces of spades are marked upon their backs, in order that they may be easily discovered in the shuffle. Their backs are also polished with hard spermaceti. This is done in order that the cards may glide easily off them whenever the pack is divided into two portions for the purpose of shuffling. The smooth faces of the other

cards glide easily off their polished backs, while the sand upon their faces causes them to adhere to the sanded backs of the rest of the pack, and keeps them in a firm position, so that the operator, whenever he divides the pack for the purpose of shuffling, finds one of the deuces of spades to be the top card of that portion of the pack which he holds in his right hand. Before he commences building his stock, he notices the card upon which he builds, which is always the card lying on the top of the pack. We will say, for instance, that his build is the king of hearts. On this card, while shuffling them together, he places the deuce of spades. He then cuts the pack apart, and shuffles a card on the first deuce of spades, and then glides the pack apart to find the second deuce. Should he miss it he shuffles underneath his stock, and keeps on so doing till he finds the second deuce of spades, which he shuffles on the top of the stock, and also a card upon it, which completes the stock. Sometimes the pack is cut by a false shuffle before placing it in the dealing-box; but more often by a "brief card." The deal is now commenced. Every card which comes from the box is duly scored by the case-keeper, and also on the cue-papers. The entire deal is conducted fairly until it comes down to the last turn. On the previous turn, the king of hearts, the build card, has won, as it must always do on the five-card turn, and its appearance warns the dealer that his work is now before him. For example, a deuce, six, and four, is marked on the case-board, as the cards remaining in the dealing-box. According to his stock he can make one of the deuces win or lose on the turn as he pleases. Should it be for his interest for it to lose, he makes the turn fairly, and it loses. But if it be for his interest that it should win, he shoves from the box at once two cards; underneath the king of hearts is buried the first deuce of spades, the next being either a six or a four, and the losing card. If he makes the first deuce lose, in order to make his cards come out right, and to hide the second deuce of spades, he presses upon the lever, and shoves two cards from the box, the underneath one being the second deuce; after it comes the "hockelty" card, which ends the deal, which, as far as fairness is concerned, gives general satisfaction to the players. If he makes it win, and turns out the king of hearts with the first deuce lying perdu beneath it, the next card will be either a six or a four, and the losing card, and the one following that is the deuce of spades, the winning card, which remains in the box.



The commanding of a single turn on a deal may seem at first sight a very insignificant advantage, and it is so when compared with exercising a pack of rounds upon a party of gamblers. The "odd card" is never brought into service, except upon such players as will not stand rounds or strippers of any kind, and who are likely to score the cards carefully as they come from the dealing-box during the deal, and who would immediately cry "foul play" were the pack to come out short at the end of the deal. Moreover, players of this description play high, and make their heaviest bets on the last turn, which circumstance gives to the sharper a very decided advantage. Though the trick called the "odd card" has been in existence twenty odd years, it is still extensively played by sharpers. Many faro-players, being warned of the trick, have tried to protect themselves by counting the cards before playing against them, but such suspicious individuals are frequently outwitted by the sharper in the following manner. He hides under the lay-out next to his shuffling board an extra deuce of spades, and whenever a customer comes along, of whom he has doubts, or who has been in the habit of counting the pack before playing against it, he hands him over a pack of cards for examination. Should his customer decline, he draws out the secreted card and puts it into the pack and goes on with his work; but if his customer counts over the pack, he takes it, shuffles it up, and makes one or two deals on the square, after which, having gained the confidence of his man, he draws forth his secreted card and goes to work on him.

Nothing in the line of card-sharping is so difficult as playing the odd card, and it will not answer for a bungler to attempt it upon any except the most verdant fools. It requires long practice and great patience to be a skillful manipulator of this branch of the business. Sharpers who have attained the highest degree of excellence in this respect have in the end been frequently detected in playing it upon their customers.

To make the cheat stronger, two odd cards have been introduced into the pack by some sharpers, which they call "fifty-four." But the work required to stock and manage two extra cards in a pack is rather of a bungling order, and it is seldom played except in aristocratic skinning-houses, where it is generally resorted to when the customers insist upon keeping the cases with cue-papers.

Sharps did not entirely confine themselves to frauds for the purpose of robbing faro-players; faro-bankers were also objects of solicitude to them. As early as 1836, a Tennessean named Miller invented an artful trick for "snaking" faro-boxes, as it is called in the sharper's parlance. This invention was called

"THE TONGUE-TELL."

Although at the present time this trick is not used by sharpers, nor has been for twenty years, yet for some years after it made its appearance it was successfully played upon faro-bankers throughout the country wherever faro-playing had taken a hold. The tongue-tell was made by inserting a false plate inside the dealing-box and underneath its mouth. Fastened to this was a piece of fine watch-spring, which ran lengthwise between the false plate and the side of the box, and came out in a fine polished steel point under the screw on the right-hand side of the box facing the player.

Fastened to this watch-spring was a pivot about the thickness of an ordinary sewing-needle and about the eighth of an inch in length. This pivot penetrated the false plate through a hole drilled for the purpose, and the point extended just sufficiently to rub against the fourth card from the top in the dealing-box. To make a pack of cards work in this box, it was necessary to trim them all on their sides with a concave plate, except the "tell" cards. For example, we will say that the "tell" cards are the queens and deuces; these are not trimmed or otherwise tampered with, except to harden their edges by rubbing them with a piece of fine linen. The concave cards in dealing could not touch the pivot, as they gradually rose up alongside of the false plate while the deal was progressing; but the "tell" cards would, and whenever one of these rubbed against the pivot, it shoved back the watch-spring, which shoved out the "tongue-tell" underneath the screw of the box. As soon as the "tell" card passed above the point of the pivot, the "tongue-tell" went back again under the screw. Whenever the "tongue-tell" stood out beneath the screw, it informed the person playing it, that either a queen or a deuce would win on the second turn.

A French watchmaker living in Natchez, by the name of Louis David, manufactured "tongue-tell" boxes for more than

ten years, in which time he made a handsome fortune. At first he charged for a silver box, the material of which did not cost \$25, \$175, and for a German silver, \$125; but in the course of a few years he lowered his price to \$125 each for silver, and \$75 for those of German silver. His boxes had attained such a celebrity for the superiority and fineness of their workmanship, that he was patronized by sharpers from one end of the country to the other.

Between the years 1837 and 1852, every faro-sharper in the country carried with him a "tongue-tell" box, and half a dozen or so packs of "tell" cards. This kit he would ring in upon verdant gamblers who were anxious to open a snap at faro, or if any of these took stock with him in a faro-bank, it is needless to say he had a "pal" on the outside to break it.

In those days, dealing-cards were not squared so smoothly on the sides and ends as at the present day, but on the contrary were sold by the manufacturers in a rough and uneven state, which greatly favored the fraud of "tell" cards from being detected. When squared cards became popular with dealers, it destroyed the efficiency of the "tongue-tell," which was shortly afterwards abandoned by sharpers as an article "played out."

#### "THE SAND-TELL,"

at the present day, answers the sharper's purpose for ridding green faro-bankers of their superfluous cash. Although previously, the value of sand-paper was well-known to the sharper, this cunning device was not discovered until 1842. The name of the person who did so cannot be handed down to grateful generations of these gentry, being unknown. Any person possessing a spark of mechanical genius, who has once seen a "sand-tell," could "snake" a set of faro-tools. Cards won't travel in a "square" box; that is, the top card on leaving the box will not drag forward the one immediately beneath it, because it is kept firmly in its place by the edge resting against the side of the box just below its mouth. By fastening a false plate on the inside, similar to those used in the two-card boxes, not allowing it to reach the mouth by just the thickness of a single card, it makes a groove into which the second card is dragged as the first leaves the box in the turn. Whatever may be the thickness

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of the false plate, say the eighth of an inch, just that space will the second card be dragged, till its edge comes in contact with the mouth of the box. Such an extent of space, or even the sixteenth of an inch, would almost certainly lead to detection, consequently the false plate is seldom made thicker than about thrice the thickness of an ordinary playing-card. If the groove between the edge of the false plate and the mouth of the box is large enough to admit two cards, or if too small to admit one, the “tell” will not work; therefore the groove must be precisely as large and no larger than to admit one card at a time to enter. When a plate of this kind is placed in a “square” box, a fair pack of cards will travel in it, or, in other words, the top card, while the dealer is making his turn, will drag the one immediately underneath it forward towards the mouth of the box, just a distance corresponding with the thickness of this false plate. The box being prepared, it is now necessary to fix the cards to make them “tell” in it, which is accomplished as follows. We will select, from the pack, for example, all the deuces, aces, and trois; these we will touch lightly on their faces with sand-paper, not molesting any of the other cards of the pack. We will now shuffle up the pack, and put it in the dealing-box. Whenever we make a turn, we can see that the top card, as it is shoved from the box, drags after it one of the others as far as the mouth, unless it is one of those we have sanded on their faces. The sanded faces of the aces, deuces, and trois, hold the cards on the top of them steady, so the manipulator, when he sees the top card stand firm, knows by that sign that a trois, deuce, or ace lies immediately beneath it, and as long as he can see that the top card has moved in the smallest degree, or traveled towards the mouth of the box, he can bet behind those three cards without fear of losing.

It requires much practice and a quick eye to work a “sand-tell” well when the work upon the box and cards is done finely. Sharpers at this fraud have frequently been detected, either from the coarseness of the workmanship on the tools, or because their avarice spurred them on to win all the money they could, for fear the cheat would be detected. A shrewd sharper never bets on any of the “snaked” cards until they become cases; he plays away from them, and is careful to make no unnatural bets, which might draw upon him the suspicions of the bankers or by-

standers. If he can win four or five bets on a deal, at the most, he is satisfied, and in this manner plays along slowly till he breaks the bank.

The faro-dealers in this country who will stand the "sand-tell" may be numbered by hundreds; but they have protected themselves from this and other frauds by keeping their tools in strong safes. At the present day there are few bankers who do not use a safe to protect themselves from the artful dodges of these worthies.

The stealing of a set of faro-tools, in order to "snake" them, first led to the detection of "tie-ups." The affair took place at Columbus, Georgia, where a couple of itinerant sharpers dropped in with a card-box full of "tie-ups." Columbus was at that time a lively place, and at that time contained as hard a set of cases in the gambling line as could be found among the whole fraternity. They were all "high rollers" against faro, had plenty of money, and, if the cards came favorably, would "chaw up" a bank in double-quick time. On this party our "tie-up" sharpers commenced their labors, and in three nights succeeded in depleting them to the amount of about \$4,000. One of the Columbians was versed in the scientific principles of the "sand-tell," which had been discovered a short while before; consequently he held a consultation with several companions, when, after a stormy debate, it was unanimously voted that the two strangers were "suckers," and ought to be "goosed." The two "tie-up" sharps opened their game every evening in the back room of a coffee-house, which was fitted up for that purpose especially. After they had closed their game they took their tools with them to their room in the hotel, in order to arrange their disorganized "tie-ups" to have sufficient for the next night. The fact of the faro-tools being left in their rooms during the day came to the knowledge of some of the Columbians. Two of them were delegated to entertain the two strangers, by showing them the most beautiful parts of the city, while the others stole the tools from their room and "snaked" them. The first part of the programme being duly accomplished, the other delegates took the kit of tools into another room in the hotel, where it was opened by means of false keys. When the contents of the card-box were exposed to the vulgar gaze of the "snakers" it created no little astonishment. For the first time they learned the virtue of "tie-

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#### INVENTORS.

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ups," and how they had been swindled out of their money during the last few days. The knowledge added a desire for revenge to their cupidity; a false plate was put into the box, the "tied-up" stocks were not molested, but certain cards in each pack were sanded, after which the tools were carefully returned to the place where they were found, everything being restored to the same position as before they were molested. The sharpers were well acquainted with the mysteries of a "sand-tell," but so deeply immersed were they in their own "little game," that they did not even suspect any one there of any designs on them, and fell victims to their cupidity and excessive confidence. The Georgians performed their part well. The fact of finding the "tie-ups" convinced them that they had under-estimated the talents of the two strangers; that they were not quite such "suckers" as they had supposed, and, therefore, it might be prudent to act rather cautiously with them. Accordingly they played along warily, but heavily, making no unnatural bets, all playing together, in order to win what they could before the cards came down to the "tied-up stock," not refusing to avert suspicion by throwing away a portion of their gains on the "stocked" cases. This they could afford to do, as the sharpers made at least two deals with each pack before changing it for a fresh one. When the sharpers had expended what "tie-ups" they had, they closed their game—losers by about \$8,000—and retired to their sleeping-room for the night. When they commenced arranging their "tie-ups" for another sitting, they found, to their mortification, not only that their trick had been discovered, but, also, that their tools had been "snaked." Not having sufficient nerve to meet the jeers of the Columbians, they took the stage early in the morning for Montgomery.

## CHAPTER XVI

## INCUBI.

It is a popular fallacy that those terrible demons that disturbed the rest of our forefathers have vanished, with many others of the belongings of those good old days. But they are still amongst us, though they now empty our pockets while broad awake, instead of sucking our blood while asleep. These vampires carry on their depleting process under the disguises of various callings, and practice upon the peaceful and industrious their robberies and extortions under many shapes. The class of mankind that are free from their machinations must be, in worldly goods, poor indeed. They toll not, neither do they spin; but prey upon their fellow men for sustenance. Among them may be found hereditary landowners, monopolists of every description, cunning priests, scheming lawyers, usurious "grip-alls," corrupt judges, scurvy politicians, greedy speculators, and blackmailers of every description. The crimes of these are not within the province of these memoirs. The pens of many abler scribes have exposed their depredations upon peaceful industry, but they are as powerful, rapacious, and selfish as ever, and will continue to be so until the broad light of intelligence is more generally diffused among the lower classes. It is with the incubi known as "gambling sharpers," who infest the land, "seeking whom they may devour," that I now propose to deal; because I am more thoroughly acquainted with the manners, customs, and artful dodges of that cunning race of thieves, than of those of their brethren in infamy.

Prejudice is fostered by ignorance. The public at large has never had anything like a correct knowledge of gambling or gamblers—the different relations and degrees of social standing which exist among them, their manners and habits, the character of their rooms, the patrons who frequent them, or the games of chance played there, or the manner in which those games are conducted. Dice-coggers, three-card throwers, red and black dealers, strap players and their ilk, with their cappers, generally of the worst rowdy order, have been met with at fairs and other public gatherings, and formerly on race-courses, plying their

calling. This class has been taken, by the public in general, as a representative one of the gambling community; for the reason that no opportunity has been given them for more correct judgment. The press of the country, either through ignorance or design, has placed gamblers before the people on the same grade as thieves and murderers; then why should the community at large be blamed for not judging them more favorably?

For many years the fraternity has keenly felt this cruel wrong, and, through this misjudgment, have at various times suffered many persecutions. Those of them able to take up the pen in defense of the brotherhood have been deterred from doing so by a fear of outrage from a horde of banded sharpers, who have become powerful in this country through their wealth and influence. To place the gambler in his proper light before the public, and expose the rascally practices of the sharper, is the principal object of this work.

#### A GAMBLER

Is a person willing to back his opinion, whenever he is in possession of any money with which to do so. His studies are the doctrine of chances, and the science of playing "short games;" that is, popular games, like poker, brag, Boston, whist, cribbage, all-fours, euchre, ecarte, chess, billiards, backgammon, etc. By studying the doctrine of chances, he makes himself acquainted with the percentage of banking games of chance, such as faro, roulette, monte, rouge-et-noir, lansquenet, hazard, vingt-et-un, etc. A thorough-bred gambler will hazard his money at all short games with which he is acquainted, and often too when he is overmatched. He will also bet his money on banking games of chance, on elections, horse-races, boat-races, boxing-matches, cock-fights, and even on raffles for turkeys if nothing better offers. It would be impossible to make a correct estimate of this class, but I scarcely think that within the broad limit of Uncle Sam's dominions three hundred thorough-bred gamblers can be found.

The majority of sporting men may be more correctly classed as gambling bankers. The greater part of these rely solely on banking games of chance without playing against them or hazarding their money at games of short cards or other sports of



the kind. Among them are some who will risk their money only in dealing faro, some in banking vingt-et-un, some in roulette, others in monte, and still others in banking chuck. The majority of faro bankers are as ready to play their money against the game as to bank it; so also will monte bankers; but it is a rare thing to see chuck, roulette, or vingt-et-un bankers, play against each other's games. Many gamblers will play at short games and against faro, who will not risk their money banking any game of chance. Some depend entirely on short games, and would not risk their money on any banking game whatever. Regarding the number of regular gamblers in this country, I doubt if the number who may be thus classed will reach two thousand, and they are now more numerous than at any former period, on account of the many produced by our civil war. But in addition to these there are at least four hundred more who may be classed as

#### MIXED GAMBLERS,

who hazard their money in banking games of chance and at whatever short games they play, with confidence; many of them being inferior to none in playing poker, Boston, brag, all-fours, whist, etc. For the most part they are men who have either inherited or gained a sufficient competency, and are in nowise dependent on their play for a livelihood. Many of them move in the highest walks of life, and among them may be found doctors, lawyers, hotel proprietors, merchants, brokers, politicians, etc. They are fond of gambling and the society of gentlemanly gamblers, to whom they often loan money when in need, and frequently take what is called a silent share in their business. They are mostly shrewd, calculating business men, well versed in all the phases of life, good judges of character, and have commanded generally more than ordinary political influence among the authorities of their places of residence. They have been the friend of the professional gambler, whenever the hand of persecution has been raised against him. Gamblers and mixed gamblers form the nucleus from which emanate all the square gambling in the country. Their numbers are far less than the public suppose. The uninitiated are deceived by the large number of employés, and the immense amount of hangers-on at a suite of gambling-rooms. All these claim to be gamblers, and

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are naturally taken for such by the public at large. I shall now separate from the assistants or hirelings the hangers-on and other leeches who follow on the heels of gamblers, but who have no real status in their community. First of all I shall marshal to the front

#### THE ASSISTANT GAMBLER.

Two persons at least are required to conduct a faro, roulette, or monte bank. I have seen as many as ten employed at the same time at a monte bank in the city of Mexico. All large faro banks in this country have usually as many as four engaged at any rate. It may happen that each of these four persons are interested in the bank; such is frequently the case—many banking games being conducted entirely by their owners. But faro bankers, like the majority of mankind who are above the necessity, dislike manual labor; and the dealing of all kinds of the games mentioned certainly comes under that head. Consequently, there are very few faro-banks dealt in this country, that have not at least one assistant employed, and several can be found that keep constantly as many as four. It would be impossible for bankers to conduct their games without their help. Nearly all the banks on the Pacific slope have four of these retainers employed, two to conduct the game during the day, and the others to attend to it during the night. Years ago, it was customary in the Atlantic States to divide among the assistants what small change was taken at the bank during the day, and in a few banks the custom is still retained; but the majority of bankers, finding themselves considerable losers by the custom, were forced to abandon it. Their assistants, in many cases, would give to outside cronies money to buy small change to play against their bank, thus taking a chance to win and none to lose; for if the money was lost against the bank it was divided amongst the employes when the game closed. At the present time, in the Atlantic States, assistants receive from \$5.00 to \$10.00 per day, and some have not been paid more than \$7.00 per week; but such cases are rare, and exist only among New England bankers, whose custom it is to pay their journeyman dealers very low. Many of these assistants get, in the course of time, an interest of five per cent. in the banks where they deal, and some as high as ten. In the territories and on the

Pacific slope they are paid \$10.00 a day, and many are allowed a dollar each day from the game, for dinner money. In the Western and Southern States, they receive from \$5.00 to \$10.00 per day for their services, the price varying with the capability and trustworthiness of the employé. The mass of assistant gamblers have no talent for card playing; few among them could be rated as second class short card players, and scarcely one among them has been capable of protecting the games at which they were employed, against the arts of sharpers.

The dealing of all banking games is a labor which may be taught to a person of ordinary capacity within a few weeks.

It would be impossible to make an estimate of the numbers of the assistant gamblers, from the fact that they spring up and retire from sight according to the increase or decrease of gambling, both public and private. During the California excitement, in the space of two years more than two thousand sprung into existence. As gambling decreased many of these sought other occupations; but the great bulk of them followed the fortunes of Gen. Wm. Walker, in his Nicaraguan expedition, where the climate, bad whiskey, and the bullets of the natives, in a majority of cases, closed their mortal career. The few who returned to New Orleans were a burden on the city; many died in the hospitals; and the few who remained on earth were swallowed up in the army during our civil war. During the rebellion, gambling increased rapidly all over the country, and before its suppression, at least ten times as many faro-banks as before flourished in the country, and gave employment to at least fifteen hundred assistant gamblers, who were all creations of the war.

With the ceasing of the war gambling greatly decreased, and the faro-banks, roulette wheels, vingt-et-un, and chuck-games dwindled down in a proportion of ten to three. In consequence of this, the newly-created gamblers were driven to other occupations for a livelihood. A few still hung around the gambling-rooms of the different cities, living upon the bounty of professional gamblers, or by wheedling a few checks from faro-players, borrowing a few dollars when they could, and in this way kept soul and body together. Finally they wore themselves out, and were obliged to seek other climes or some other pursuit for maintenance. Perhaps one thousand assistant gamblers are at present employed around the different faro-banks in the United

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States and territories. I shall now bring forward a class for whom I am unable to find a more appropriate name than

#### SYCOPHANT GAMBLERS.

This parasitical class hang around all kind of gambling bankers, whom they contrive to leech in one way or another. Among them are to be found men of culture and refinement, who consider labor degrading, but are not ashamed to become the spies and pimps of gamblers, from whose pockets, as they are destitute of all talent, they derive their support. Some, on account of their companionable qualities, have their expenses paid by the banker to whom they cling; others make themselves useful by keeping the accounts of a gambling-house, and transacting out-door business; and not a few have obtained the confidence of their patrons to such a degree as to be entrusted with the money belonging to the bank, and the control of its domestic affairs, for which they receive a salary of from \$100 to \$150 per month. Others of them obtain a small interest in the bank, for their real or supposed influence in obtaining customers. There is also the protector of the faro-bank, generally a worn-out prize-fighter resting on his laurels, in many places an important personage. Sometimes he is only a bully of the better description, whose presence in the rougher order of gambling-houses is a discouragement to rowdiness, and whose services are usually required at the rate of from \$5 to \$10 per day. These peaceful guardians of gambling-houses should not be properly classed among the Sycophants, as they are generally useful appendages to it; neither should the blackmailing class whom I shall now marshal into line.

These worthies are generally of the lower order of politicians, who have sufficient influence with the police to induce them to spare whatever house they wish to protect, and to shut up whatever place has made itself obnoxious to them, by the refusal of its proprietor to submit to their blackmailing. The stock in trade of the political blackmailer is either fawning or bullying, or both, and he makes either useful, or both, as the case may be, whenever he can find a banker weak-minded or timorous enough for him to prey upon. His pay generally depends on the liberality of his dupe, but often on the amount of terror with which he can

manage to inspire him. He has often received an interest of ten per cent. in a faro-bank, for his mere promise to protect it against the raids of the police, and some have been known to receive twenty-five per cent. It is to be understood that, if the bank won, their share of the winnings must remain with the rest, until the stockholders made a dividend.

It would be utterly impossible to estimate the number of sycophants and blackmailers who hang around and feed upon gamblers. In some places it is impossible to shake them off, while in others they are perfectly independent of them. The parasitical tribe are to be found, more or less, in every place, and will be, so long as foolish gamblers exist, who will allow themselves to be leeches by them. They help to swell the number of those persons known under the name of gambler. The last and most numerous of this tribe I shall place under the head of

#### HANGERS-ON.

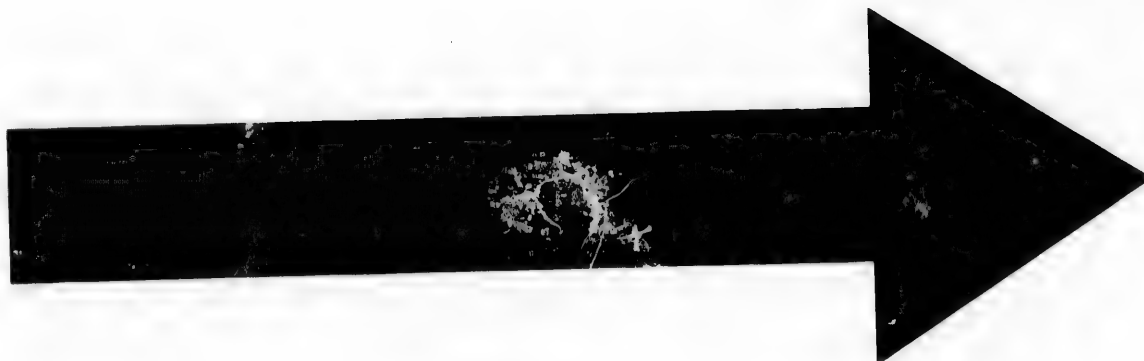
This class outnumber all those described, five to one. They hover around gambling-houses of the lower order in our cities, lounge around hotels, coffee-houses, and billiard-rooms, and seem to have no visible means of support. They live by begging, borrowing, and stealing chips from the players around the faro-tables. Whenever they can get a stake they will play it, or will steal a sleeper from the table, if they can get away with it. Many of them are cappers and ropers for skinning-houses, and not a few are dependent upon unfortunate women for support. Numbers of them are clothed in the most fashionable style, and seem to enjoy life with the wealthiest in the land. In our large cities hangers-on are excluded from all the better class gambling-houses.

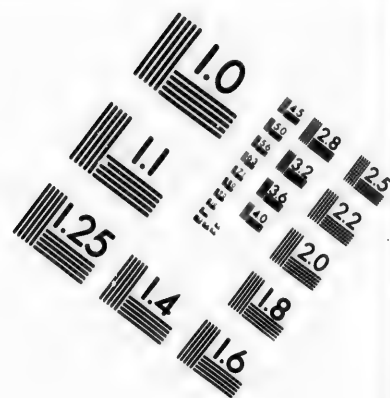
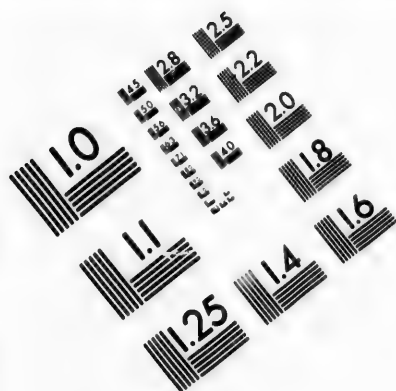
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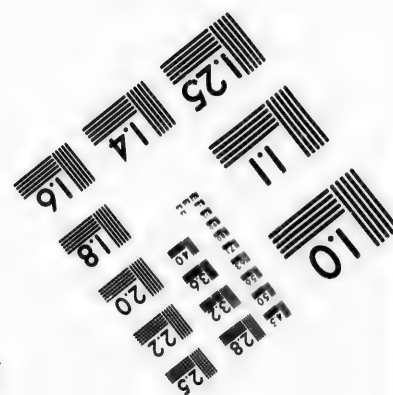
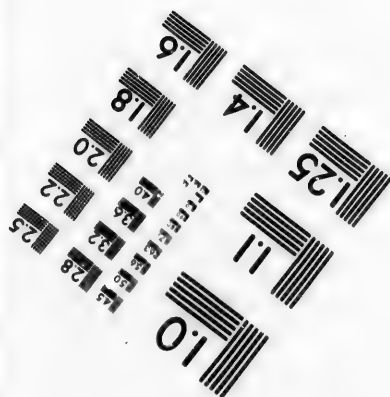
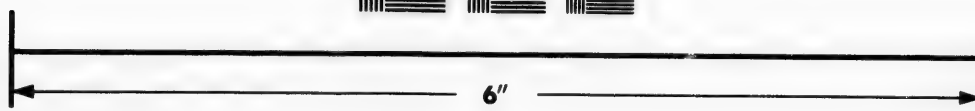
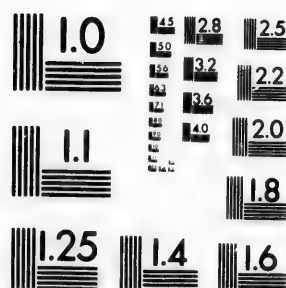
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## CHAPTER XVII.

## SHARPER.

The brotherhood is numerous and varied. But the individual to whom we wish to introduce our reader is the sharper who lives under the cloak of the gambler. To chance money on an equal hazard is not only repugnant to his principles and constitution, but in direct violation of his conscience. As he seldom possesses any skill in playing short card games, he does not waste his time nor risk his money on such follies, except when he chances to find a verdant adversary whom he can cheat. His stock in trade is two-card boxes and gorgeously furnished apartments. The bare thought of banking a 28-numbered roulette wheel, or a chuck-luck box, unless the former is worked with a trigger, and the latter in the hands of a No. 1 dice-cogger, makes him turn pale and clutch his pockets tighter. If one of his tribe ever dealt a square banking game of chance he has deluded some unfortunate individual into staking him. Not a farthing of his own money goes that way. He would consider it most culpably wasted. He will sometimes play against faro, which has often impoverished him; for but a short time, however. With his two-card box he reaps from the crop of fools that spring up yearly, which presently sets him again on a sound pecuniary footing, and he flourishes like a green bay tree until his penchant for "fighting the tiger" again overtakes him. But the more sapient sharper knows the value of his money, like the persecuted Jew, and is better posted than to lavish it against faro-banks, or to waste it in luxurious living, unless by so doing he can increase it a hundred fold. Ability and wealth make their distinctions among this community, as among more honest people; therefore, in endeavoring to describe them, I shall place them in two orders, the proprietors of first and second-class "skinning-houses."

## FIRST-CLASS "SKINNING-HOUSES."

In our large cities may be found numbers of these, as well as at our fashionable watering-places. They are magnificently furnished, as much as \$50,000 having been expended in the fit-

ting up of some of them. The walls and ceilings are artistically frescoed, while from the latter depend costly chandeliers, adorned with Bohemian glass shades. The finest Brussels and Turkey carpets cover the floors, and from the costly cornices hang double curtains of rich silk and lace. The furniture is of the most expensive and fashionable style, conspicuous among which is a magnificent side-board, loaded with silver goblets and the finest cut-glass, together with the choicest wines, liquors, and cigars, for the free use of the guests of the house. Many of them are adorned with valuable pieces of bronze and marble statuary, representing horses, fawns, nymphs, etc., while costly oil paintings decorate the walls.

The gaming paraphernalia consist of a faro-table of the finest design and workmanship, and a No. 28 roulette wheel, placed on another table, quite as handsome and artistic. The checks and other articles belonging to the games are of the most elaborate style possible, and a large fancy safe occupies a conspicuous place, calculated to give a solid and moneyed look to the establishment. Adjoining this apartment is the dining-room, furnished in the same gorgeous manner. The table is provided with heavily embossed and carved silver service, and can seat comfortably thirty or forty guests. Before them are placed, in fine porcelain and Sevres dishes, the choicest viands, comprising every delicacy to be obtained, served up by a "*maitre de cuisine*" unsurpassed in his art. Fruits, both in and out of season, gratify the eye and tempt the palate, and from costly Bohemian and cut-glass expensive and delicious wines are drank. No expense is spared in furnishing the table with everything which would meet the approval of the most fastidious epicure. Nightly at eleven o'clock these luxurious feasts are furnished the patrons of the house. The expenses of these establishments depend much upon their location, and also range according to their order. For instance, to run a first-class house such as I have described at Saratoga, or Long Branch, or New York city, would probably cost \$250 per day; while some of those of Baltimore, Philadelphia, or Boston, would not require over \$100 per day; and many are run that do not cost more than \$50 per day.

Within a few years the proprietors of some of these aristocratic "skinning-houses" have hired reporters to write articles for insertion in the newspapers to which they belonged, describing

their establishments, setting forth their splendor and magnificence, and laudatory of the manner in which they were kept. These may be styled "ambiguous advertising dodges" for the purpose of drawing strangers to their houses. I have selected two of these, which will speak for themselves, and which will give the reader an idea of the magnificence and splendor of these places, and also of the immense sums spent in decorating and fitting up these palatial robbing dens, and the social standing of the gulls who frequent and support them.

**A Gorgeous Gaming Palace.**—Description of the "Maryland Gentlemen's Club House," in Baltimore.—Scenes of Dazzling Splendor!—Dedication Banquet!—The Bank opens its career by winning a Stake of \$20,000.

[Baltimore (Sept. 12) Correspondence of the New York World.]

The great gaming house of Slater, Kirby & Parker, the opening of which has been looked forward to with immense interest by the sporting men of this city and vicinity, was inaugurated last evening by a grand dinner, to which about two hundred invitations were issued.

The building in itself is an old one, and has long been used as a sporting establishment; but the proprietors becoming ambitious, and the "gentlemen" of Baltimore complaining at the want of a first-class "club house," it has undergone a complete renovation, the floors in the upper part of the building being raised four feet each, the rooms in the second story thrown into one, and connected with a large dining-hall in the rear, through folding doors, and the ground-floor being devoted exclusively to kitchen and store-room purposes. The upper story is divided into private club-rooms, bed-chambers, bath-rooms, and wire-closets. A large cellar extends the length of the building underground, and a private entrance leads out into the open lot on a back street, through which the visitors can pass if desirous of shunning the main entrance.

#### REGARDLESS OF EXPENSE.

In making these extensive preparations, no regard has been paid to their cost, it being the intention of the proprietors to make it the first club house in the country. The total cost, I am

told, of furnishing the house, amounted to fifty thousand dollars. This does not include various costly works of art, such as rare paintings and statues, and the dinner service, for which the round sum of twenty thousand dollars was paid to one European firm alone.

Dinner was set for six o'clock. Shortly before that time about one hundred and fifty persons assembled in the great saloon on the second floor, where the several games of faro, roulette, etc., are played. Special care was had in issuing invitations, to select those only known to be fearless votaries of this game of chance, so that by far the greater number of those present were men of at least ordinary means, and many of wealth. All were dressed in

#### FULL DINNER COSTUME.

Black coats and pants, white vests, and white neck-ties. The company numbered many of the most distinguished men of Maryland, members of the State Legislature, Judges of the higher Courts, and a score or so of representatives of the city government, contractors, etc. At 6.30 P. M. the dinner was announced, and the guests took their seats at the table. But before discussing this part of the proceedings, I will briefly touch upon the furniture and appointments of the house, which, from personal observation, exceeded in splendor and completeness any of the kind in this country, or, in fact, in Europe, not even excepting the famous establishment of Baden-Baden. The latter, however, is much larger.

#### A GORGEOUS VESTIBULE.

The hall door which faces Calvert street, about half a block from Baltimore street, the principal thoroughfare in the city, opens into a small vestibule, from the ceiling of which hangs a large bell-shaped chandelier lined with silver, and with the jets so arranged, that the light streams down and outward in a soft flood, revealing oak-paneled walls in etchings of gold, and a lofty ceiling frescoed with groups of sporting naiads. Immediately beyond, and dividing the hall into two parts, stands another and a more massive door of solid walnut. A colored servant in evening dress sits behind this, and, after inspecting the visitor through a small oval glass on one side, yields or refuses admittance, accord-

ing as the applicant is known to the house, or gives evidence of being a bona-fide customer. This inner hall-way is larger than the outer, and once over its threshold, the visitor is at liberty to explore the mysteries above, to which a flight of steps winds slowly upwards. The same paneled walls and a similar chandelier mark this second hall, which has, however, the addition of a velvet carpet, thick enough to stifle the heaviest foot-fall. In a niche in the wall, and overlooking the stairway, is a statue of Don Cœsar de Bazan, in bronze, about half life size.

## MAGNIFICENT FURNITURE.

The main saloon, to which the hall stairs conduct, occupies the entire front of the second story, and is about sixty feet long and thirty wide. It is gorgeously fitted up. A seamless dark blue velvet carpet, like that in the east room of the White House, covers the floor, over which are scattered articles of furniture of the most massive description. On the right, as you enter, an etagere of rose-wood that reaches up to the ceiling; two bronze statues of Richard Cœur de Lion and Phillipe Auguste rest on its lower shelves, flanking a famous equine bronze representing a stallion teasing a mare. A mirror forms the backing of this piece of furniture, which was imported at a cost of three thousand, five hundred dollars. On the left stands a side-board on which are ranged all sorts of decanters and glasses, the former of cut glass, and filled with various kinds of wines and liquors; these are at the gratuitous use of the visitors. All along the room are placed various articles of furniture, made wholly of walnut and rose-wood; sofas, chairs, foot-stools, massive round tables for the convenience of short card parties, writing-desks, lounges, etc. Two mantels of Parian marble, surmounting ranges of the most approved and costly make, are set in the west wall, over which hang two mirrors of French plate glass set in walnut frames, with an intertwining of gold leaves and vine work. Other mirrors of equally large dimensions surround the room, reflecting the smallest object it contains.

## AN ARTISTIC CHECK-BOOK.

The check-book for the use of persons who, having no ready cash, are yet desirous of playing, together with other writing

materials, is kept in a large book-case in one corner of the saloon. This book-case is filled with private compartments of various sizes, in which such articles as are accidentally left behind by the players are kept until called for. It also contains a number of secret drawers, used to keep "collateral" in until redeemed.

#### BLUE AND GOLD.

The walls of this saloon are paneled similarly to those of the entry, except that the background is of blue, and there is a freer use of gold. The contrast between this and the frescoes on the ceilings is very striking and effective, the artist having given his figures a joyous animate expression, that well accords with the rich warm color. The windows are concealed by fine lace drapery, backed by heavy damask curtains, pendent from cornices of rosewood with gold borders. The room is lit by three chandeliers similar to those already described, and a number of jets in small clusters here and there on the wall.

#### THE GAMING TABLES

are three in number. At two of these faro is played; at the other, roulette. The tables are as large as possible, consistent with comfort, and their appointments, such as chips, dealing-boxes, cue-cards, etc., are of the finest quality. Immediately behind the faro-table hang two pictures of Rubens, representing Sunrise and Sunset at Sea. A third, of a French Peasant Girl, returning home laden with fruits, is the production of a clever French artist whose name now escapes my memory. The dealers, of whom there are five, are men well known in the profession.

#### MORE SPLENDOR UP-STAIRS.

The upper story comprises seven chambers, three of which are used as club rooms. Appurtenances for playing all sorts of games can be found in them, and the furniture is of the richest possible description. Back of these rooms are three bed-chambers elegantly furnished. The beds are importations, and cost five hundred dollars each. These rooms are for the use of players who wish to leave the city by an early morning train, or who, from too

free libations of champagne, are disinclined to walk home. A bath-room, with hot and cold water, is attached to each chamber. The kitchen and store-room run the whole length of the ground-floor. The former is larger than any hotel kitchen in the city, and has a range able to cook provisions for one hundred persons at a time; its cost was three thousand, five hundred dollars. One head and three under cooks and two scullions comprise the force employed here. The wine-cellar, which is under ground, is filled with casks and butts, and long shelves on which are deposited various kinds of wine, of which each separate brand has its own compartment. Twenty thousand dollars' worth of wines and liquors are stored here already, and a large importation, I am told, is *en route*.

## THE CLIMAX OF ENCHANTMENT.

Of all the various departments of the house, however, it is reserved for the dining hall to stand forth as the Alpha and Omega of its many splendors. The entrance to it is from the main saloon, and it is through folding-doors of stained box-wood, the panels of which are carved to represent various scenes of the chase. They move on noiseless wheels in grooves an inch and a half deep, made so on account of the great superincumbent weight. On the day of opening, after the announcement of dinner, these doors were thrown wide open, and the guests, headed by the proprietors, were conducted to their seats at the table, which was in the shape of a capital T. A printed *menu*, according to which seventeen courses were to be served, lay by the side of each plate, together with a list of wines, and the order in which they were to follow each other.

## A RICH AND RARE TABLE.

The table is an immense affair, and is capable of seating eighty persons. It is made of black walnut, supported by heavy dragon-legs of the same material. The chairs are also of black walnut, with soft cushions, covered with green morocco. The appointments of the table are dazzlingly magnificent. In the centre rests an enormous silver ice-holder, which can be also used as a flower-stand. Its sides are of solid silver, with an embossed net-work of branches and fruits in virgin gold; the inside is also of the



same metal. Flowers to the amount of two hundred and fifty dollars filled it, reaching almost to the ceiling. Here and there, over the table, were smaller stands, also filled with flowers, connected with each other and the centre-piece by links of roses, so that each guest saw his *vis-à-vis* through a flowery screen, as it were.

#### A DAZZLING DINNER-SERVICE.

All the glass used in this establishment is cut, and of European importation, and stamped with the initial "S." The glasses have cleverly executed portraits of prominent German politicians on their sides. The rest of the dinner-service is of solid silver, lined with gold. Among other things are two silver pitchers, two feet high, which were made in Geneva at a cost of one thousand dollars each.

#### BRIGHT AS SUNLIGHT.

The room is lit brilliantly by two chandeliers and various side jets. The heat and smoke from the former pass through apertures in the roof arranged on the same principle as those used in the Hall of Representatives at Washington. The walls are unlike those in the main saloon, being box-wood paneled with etchings of scarlet and silver to match the doors. Half a score of sporting prints in walnut frames are suspended about the room. The floor is laid with a red velvet carpet, so thick and soft that the foot falls noiselessly upon it.

It would be next to impossible to give a detailed account of the various courses served to the 150 guests present at the banquet. The first caterer of Baltimore had the affair in charge, and as that city is famous for its *cuisine*, his efforts were of course a success. Speeches were made by prominent gentlemen, laudatory of the enterprise of the management in enacting so fine a club room, and the establishment was unanimously christened the "Maryland Gentlemen's Club House." After dinner the play ranged high, the bank beginning its career by a run of luck, winning about \$20,000, half of which was lost by a well-known City Hall contractor.

The foregoing article first made its appearance in the New York *World*, and from thence found its way into the columns of many of the newspapers throughout the country. It was written

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#### SHARPERS.

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by the order of Slater, the principal proprietor, whose inordinate pride could not be satisfied unless the public were made acquainted with his new gorgeous establishment. Besides, it was an advertisement to draw strangers visiting Baltimore, on business or pleasure, to his house. A few words will be sufficient to inform the reader of the new founded institution christened at its dedicatory banquet, the "Maryland Gentlemen's Club."

Doc. Slater, as he is nicknamed, was raised in the city of Baltimore, and brought up to the butchering business. He belonged to that political class which for many years ruled Baltimore with pistols, knives, brass-knuckles, and slung-shots, known as "Plug Uglies," among whom he was a kind of leader, up to the time of their suppression, which was not until the commencement of the rebellion. About this time he discarded the knife and steel, and his stall in the market, and went to gambling. He had indulged in it surreptitiously from boyhood up, and later as an amateur; but never before had he come out and taken his place among professionals. With two others he put up a faro-game in the same building where the Maryland Gentlemen's Club at present exists. This bank played for all persons, at an open limit of \$6.25, and was almost exclusively patronized by the rougher class. Incredible as it may appear, with so small a limit, the bank in the course of a year, besides its expenses, won \$40,000. Slater's partners, satisfied with their share, withdrew from the partnership and sold their share in the house to Slater. He now run the bank himself and increased the limit to \$25 open. For more than a year success attended him, when he closed his house, renovated it, and furnished it respectably. He now meant to entertain a different class of customers, and gave to his doorkeeper orders to admit no one except those whom he had invited. To these he furnished, gratuitously, liquors, and plain but substantial three o'clock dinners and ten o'clock suppers. Fortune still smiled on him; his bank seldom lost. Young and inexperienced in his profession, never having met with any reverses worthy the name, he believed it impossible for a faro-bank to lose, and felt too proud to have it said that he put a limit on his game. He invited all gamblers transiently in the city to come and play. When no other established bank could be found in the country to take higher than \$500 bets from a single player, his bank turned for wagers of \$5,000. He staked gambling-houses in Washington,

Philadelphia, Annapolis, and Cape May, besides entrusting money to different gamblers, and allowing them to roam all over the country with it, in search of faro-players. Many of these were unable to protect it, and many made no effort to do so, while others spent it among themselves or played it off against various faro-banks. Finally, fortune, who had so long favored, deserted him. This happened in 1868, and before reverses had overtaken him he was worth about \$80,000, and had lived at the rate of \$20,000 a year, being an "extravagant case." His bank lost almost continually for two years, and after it had drained from him his last dollar, he still kept it going by borrowing from his friends until his debts exceeded \$20,000. But friends soon tired of giving up their money when it was doubtful, to say the least, whether it would not follow what had preceded it. The Doc's circumstances had now gotten to their lowest ebb. A few months of his former good luck would have reinstated him, for the wealthiest and highest in the land patronized his game. But fortune refused to be propitiated, and would not smile again upon him. She had once distributed to him her gifts with a lavish hand; but he was too dull to seize upon and appropriate them. Some of the two-card sharpers of Washington had been for several years greedily watching the fat fish that frequented Slater's place, and had on many occasions reminded him how easily their money might be made to change hands through the agency of a two-card box, instead of allowing them to walk away with his, through "bull-headed luck." To these overtures Slater had turned a deaf ear, until he knew not where to obtain money to carry on his game. The Parker, mentioned as one of the proprietors of the Maryland Gentlemen's Club House, had made about \$200,000 by keeping a skinning-house in Washington, during the war. Being a moneyed man, Slater courted his friendship. When he could no longer borrow money from his friends in Baltimore to sustain his bank, he applied to Parker, who loaned him \$5,000. When that was gone he again sought Parker, which worthy gentleman politely informed him he'd no more money to shoot off at "suar' farrer," but if he wanted to fit up a stunner of a house and let his man Kirby go into it as operator, he was willing to throw up \$100,000 that way. Slater was in desperate need; he hesitated, and then yielded, and we are indebted to the reporter for his description of the place, and the

dedicatory dinner given by Messrs. Slater, Kirby & Parker. "After dinner the play ran high, the bank beginning its career by winning a stake of \$20,000, half of which was lost by a prominent City Hall contractor."

## CHAPTER XVIII

## SCENES AT LONG BRANCH.

*Some Social Contrasts There.—Johnny Chamberlain and his Establishment at Long Branch.*

## CHAMBERLAIN'S GAMING-HOUSE.

[From the Chicago Tribune, July 22, 1870.]

Sitting one night on the wide, cheerful verandah of the West End, looking out upon Fisk's six-in-hand going by, I saw that worthy address a square-set, black-haired, black-eyed man, riding by in a trotting wagon.

"That's Johnny Chamberlain," said a gentleman, "that fleshy one. Do you see how he holds his buttoned coat-collar close up to his throat with his hand; he's got a mighty bad cough, has Johnny, and if he don't watch sharp, they'll plant him next spring where he won't grow any more."

"That's the great gambler, is it? He's young looking, and not ill looking."

Oh, he's as good a fellow as ever you see. He's full of enterprise. Morrissey is a *parvenue* to Johnny Chamberlain. He's put \$90,000 into that club house, and he has got up, all of his own idea, the notion of a racing park here; and that man has put \$150,000 of his own money into that park before he asked any one to help him a cent's worth. Then he raised \$100,000 just by asking one or two of us. He's a young man. He's got a wonderful memory. He's never been married, but he's a business man right through. It's just up and up with Johnny Chamberlain, square and square. He never asks nobody to play cards nor buy a chip. He never looks for it, he scorns it."

"It seems rather strange that a man can have all the business

virtues, when his occupation is to stimulate the propensity of men to play and ruin themselves in a night, out of a year's labor."

Just at this time the man referred to in the talk, appeared upon the piazza, and stood for some time leaning against the jamb of the main door, quietly peering down the porch amongst the men. The proprietors and several other people went up to him. He had a short cough now and then, which caused inquiries into his health and copious advice. He seemed to be a petty man among the average of manhood congregated there, in the deepening evening of the seaside. It was a beautiful night up in the sky, and the stars were out, and the far-off sails were clearly seen riding under the moon. All the senses of men were acute, and their cigars smoked like the blessings of providence, lulling such sharpened intellects. We all talked of the lives of gamblers, and it was easy, in that atmosphere, to see reasons for wickedness, and trace commercial laws out of the ebb and flow of ineradicable sins. This gambler grew to be a merchant, that supplied a want implanted in man. His success, and the uses he put it to, dignified the investment. The mind rambled illogically around the superficies of history, and discovered, without effort, that he was no worse than this politician, or that soldier, or yonder speculator. We grew upon wonderfully apologetic terms towards everybody in that enlivening atmosphere, and every conviction slipped away as if it were an unfounded prejudice now for the first time exposed and discarded. Such are the heights, such the atmosphere when we forswear our vows, and take merit upon ourselves, at the moment, for so doing.

"Come over to the club house, and I'll introduce you," said my friend, the editor. "I know him right well."

The club house was now all full of light, half emitted from its carefully-closed window-sashes, but streaming ruddily and welcoming from the open door. Two gaudy lamps on the gate-posts blazed red and white.

"I never played faro, or bet a dollar in my life."

"If he sees you betting anything there, he'll put you out. He never allows *us* to play. There will be no hints of any kind."

"Come on! It's part of experience."

Suppose I had been a man with a pocket full of money, what might have that experience cost me!

"These gate lamps," said my conductor, "were presents from Bill Tweed, of New York. Tweed is the Grand Sachem of Tammany Hall. The cottage of itself cost sixty thousand dollars, and Chamberlain claims that the whole affair cost him \$90,000."

We had now passed through a wide-open gate, always closed by day, into a very large level lawn, inclosing perhaps fifty acres, the only buildings whereon were the club house, an ice-house just beneath it, and a stable two rods further away; both ice-house and stable were roofed with variegated slate and handsomely capped with golden vanes and rods.

The club house itself was of a pale yellow color frame, and three stories high; the upper story in a tipped Mansard roof of beautiful inlaid slate, and the whole was tipped with a gilded balustrade of peculiar iron work. A piazza surrounded the first story of the house, of a light and beautiful construction—green trellis-work below, the columns painted red, with gilt Corinthian capitals, and the balustrade above was also yellow and gilt. There was but one entrance, and that a grand one, with a drive meandering up to it. The whole edifice was a gem of carpentry, standing high and gracefully, and I guessed its proportions to be eighty feet square. It is the noblest cottage on Long Branch, and but one or two pretend to cope with it.

As the sound of our feet rang on the steps, three or four persons appeared, well dressed, and I thought one of them, a negro, wore white gloves. There were plausible invitations all around of "Good evening, gentlemen. Walk in, gentlemen."

We passed into an elegant house, rather extravagantly bedecked with mirrors, and yet upholstered in places with as much taste as cost. Copious supplies of gas filled the many softly enameled globes of the chandeliers, and these lights were reproduced in the mirrors; while yet the rich carpets were of subdued patterns, and the wall paper would have done credit to an educated lady's eye. The furniture was as unique and solid as the workmanship of the day can afford. The time has gone by when we can describe a master gambler by his gaudy surroundings. The arts find no better patrons in our time than successful gamblers. The tenderest, neatest palaces they build, and are at Hamburg, Saratoga, Baden-Baden, and Long Branch. Splits and trumps are sovereigns.

I am going to tell what I thought about this place at the mo-

ment, and not draw morals in advance. Being in a man's own house, and being welcomed, I could do no worse than be polite, and I looked about me with something, perhaps, of Aladdin's sensation, when he first struck his lamp and saw the illuminated caverns of the genii. It was sumptuous, and by its elegance inspired respect. Room opened into room, so that there were three or four apartments into one, all brilliantly lighted, and nothing offended the eye except the instruments that had reared this structure and furnished it—the green tables. Behind a plain table in the first room sat a man, and at his left elbow were piled up round ivory checks, red and white. In the second room a long handsome piece of furniture, with carved legs, reached along the wide side of the wall, a man behind it, and in the middle of the table a brass wheel was sunken into the baize, and around the brass were numbers and colors in circles, and on the verge of the table were various other plots, patterns, handles, and so forth, betokening different means of wagering money.

Opposite this infernal machine was a third table and a man behind it, and the engraved copy of a whole pack of cards was enameled into the table, while at the man's elbow were piles of ivory checks. This I knew to be the faro-bank, and a silver box was standing upon it, the dealing-box. All the men were neatly dressed, and they all said,

"Good evening, gentlemen."

"Where is John?" said the editor.

"He was here just now. Perhaps he has gone over to the hotel. Will you walk in and take some supper?"

As we paused, irresolutely, there were cries of "Here is Mr. Chamberlain; here he is!"

The man I had seen at the hotel walked in and addressed my friend in a hearty way, and at once led the way to the supper-room.

"Take seats," he said; "here is about everything—frogs, woodcock, quails, robins, trout, soft-shell crabs, and terrapins. William, some wine."

A black man, of deferential manners, gave me a plate of frogs and robins, and filled a glass with such wine that all previous viaticages of my acquaintance seemed mere cider to it. The table was epicurean in every part, and at the head of it, next to the host, was a beefsteak which seemed to be a tenderloin cut from a megatherium, so large and juicy was it.

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"Do you set such a table every night, John?"

"All day and all night; I like to see my friends eat. My cook is the best that money can hire."

A tall, bald-headed, affable man, also a gamester, belonging to the place, drew up to the table, and took a piece of woodcock. He said that all Morrissey's furniture at Saratoga was made in Grand street, New York, while John bought every article he possessed in Paris. The John named last here turned to me and said he would be happy to drive me out to the track any morning I wanted to go.

Chamberlain was a good-looking man under forty years of age, with the blackest eye one can see in a man's head, large, piercing, and animal-like, and at once beautiful and dangerous. His forehead was good, and with large developments over the eyebrows, so strong that I was not mistaken to see some instances of a wonderful memory, so necessary to a gamester. The lower part of his face and nose were coarser, and his moustache appeared to be dyed, while his hair was glossy black as the crow's wing. He had a laughing manner, a good smile, and in his features the gentleman and the outlaw were blended. His shoulders were broad and square, and his frame was over-powerful, and he stood upon his feet in that posture approaching bow-leggedness, which is natural in the sporting man and the sparrer. Withal, he looked his part, a man of wild instincts stricken with a commercial ambition, and erecting his vices into a business interest; a young man, still unmarried, but consoling himself with the temporary possession of one of the most voluptuous actresses in America; dearly paid for, and fickle as dear, his very prosperity was pitiful; never to know the truth and consolation of home, to be an askant study for his guests, and to be always considered at his worst; to feel, perhaps, that his winnings could bring him no blessings; to look around, upon the teeming, struggling world, and know that in considering their species, they never include him; to catch their eye as he rode by, and feel that the words they felt were, "bloody gambler." Then, that occasional cough, which seemed to hurt him, and I noticed, with sympathy, that the negro always got behind him solicitously, when he coughed so, and looked down upon Chamberlain like his own prodigal son and master.

After eating, we talked a few minutes, and Chamberlain



described the house. There was his famed side-board, made entirely of inlaid wood, costing \$1,200. The upholstery of his tall-backed chairs was praised, and the lateness of the season advertised to. As we passed through the main gambling saloon, an appearance of wild delight was manifested by every one of the three employés; the roulette man spun his ball as if he was playing with a ghost that "bucked" opposite; the faro man drew off the top card and gravely "coppered" the ace all by himself; the third man spun a round check at something invisible, and looked alive to business. If these were temptations to play, I put them by, saying: "It would take a man as dumb as myself two years to understand these things." "Take my advice," said Chamberlain, "and never learn; I am too old to forget them."

We took an omnibus at the door, and the host, calling, "Pete, come with me," jumped in with us, saying he had a visit to make down the beach drive.

"Master Johnny, is you going off in de night air, widout yo' ovacoat?"

He put it over the gamester's shoulders, as if he were his fragile and best beloved daughter. What would American life be without the negro's loyalty? *Sarkis*

Gentle reader, if you have learned anything regarding the magnificence and gorgeous fitting up of our aristocratic skinning-houses, and the sumptuous manner in which they entertain their guests, from the foregoing description of Johnny Chamberlain and his fashionable "*Maison de Jeu*," at Long Branch, given us by that ethical blatherskite of a reporter, I am satisfied for the present. For the insertion of that article in the "*Chicago Times*," and its subsequent transplanting to the "*St. Louis Democrat*," Johnny disbursed at least the round sum of \$150, if not \$200.

His description of the personnel of Johnny Chamberlain is very good, as is also that of his club house at Long Branch. The statement that he is unmarried is incorrect. He is married, and also indulges in the aforementioned voluptuous looking mistress. That dangerous cough, which so deeply aroused the sympathies of our blatherskite reporter, is all a humbug; Chamberlain has the constitution of an ox, and, I will venture to say,

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has not the remotest idea that any one will plant him for many years to come. After a hard night's debauch, many men are troubled with a cough, and such, no doubt, was the origin of the one with which Johnny was troubled when our voracious informant pretends he first made his acquaintance—that learned pundit, who informs us the "splits and trumps" are sovereigns.

"But who is Johnny Chamberlain?" methinks I hear the uninitiated reader inquire. "What is the reason of his wonderful success in his profession?"

Gentle reader! It is to his indomitable energy, brazen impudence, and a two-card faro-box. His first appearance in public life was made as bar-tender on one of the numerous steamboats running from the port of St. Louis. While in this capacity, he learned the rudiments of short card sharpening from those thieves, some of whom never failed to travel on every river steamer, and made himself useful to them in their search for suckers. He assisted them in making up their games from among the passengers, and then rung in their marked cards for them, keeping them in his bar until wanted for use. As he became farther advanced, he insisted on an equal share of the spoils, and exacted the same from all three-card-monte throwers who came aboard his boat to ply their calling. He followed up this business successfully for three or four years, and, being thrifty, accumulated a considerable capital, and in the meantime obtained an insight into the immense profits to be derived from roping suckers to brace games. Being gifted with a happy faculty of commending himself to strangers, and a willingness to spend his money freely whenever he thought he could make ten dollars for one by so doing, and being well acquainted with all the haunts of pleasure and vice in the City of St. Louis, he made a capital "roper-in" for a two-card box establishment. In his mind's eye, he marked out each passenger on the boat, during her trip to St. Louis, whom he thought likely to prove a profitable subject to him, and, after showing him the "sights" of the city, would bring him up standing before a "brace game," have him robbed, and afterwards receive half the plunder.

Johnny Chamberlain shortly became known amongst sharpers, as the best "roper-in" in the city of St. Louis, and, in fact, the best in all the West. Partly through the inducements of these, but probably much more through his own knowledge of the

profits and advantages of a skinning-house, he threw up steam-boating, and opened one of these establishments for himself. He was obliged to take with him an operator, because he was totally unable to exercise a two-card box himself; nor do I believe he can cheat at any of the games played for money. Even could he do so, his functions were on the outside, to lure customers into his den. This business he diligently followed up, until the spring of 1864, having increased his store of wealth thereby, up to forty thousand dollars, and by his audacity and energy as a roper, gained the envy of all the sharpers throughout the West. Meanwhile, however, he had become pretty well played out in St. Louis; so much so, in fact, that any "brace dealer," having any respect for his future bread and butter, would not be seen with him in public. Johnny was now desirous of taking the money he had accumulated with him to New York, and there opening an aristocratic skinning-house. Heretofore, he had mixed only among second-class sharpers; he was now anxious to be ranked in the first division of that honorable fraternity, and more especially among those of New York city, where a wider field was open for the exercise of his talents, and a higher goal within reach of his unbounded ambition. To accomplish his desire, it was necessary to have the countenance of some first-class sharper. It must be understood that not even the Brahmins themselves, nor those of England's aristocracy who claim their descent from the heroes of the field of Hastings, are greater sticklers for caste, than the American sharper. Powerful as is money—and its influence is not less among this than other classes of mankind—it has in many cases failed in launching the keeper of a second-class skinning-house within that magic cordon which separates them from those of their tribe who have never been interested in any but a first-class house of the sort. Johnny found the individual he was seeking, in the person of a worthy gentleman from the blue-grass country in Kentucky, who, for many years previous to the rebellion, was principal proprietor of one of the most fashionable of these places in the city of New Orleans. When Gen. Butler was placed in command, after the capture of the city by the Federal forces, he allowed no card-sharpping within his dominions, in consequence of which, the aristocratic skinning-house at No. 4 Carondelet street, belonging to Mr. McGrath, was closed. When Gen. Butler was superseded in

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command of the city, Mr. McGrath left his home in the blue-grass country, and went again to New Orleans, with the intention of again opening his house there; but his first attempt at doing so caused his arrest and incarceration in the parish prison, where he was kept for more than a year by the Federal authorities. On regaining his liberty, he made the best of his way to St. Louis, where he arrived without a dollar. Being one of the best ropers in the country, and a man of distinguished parts in a fashionable skinning-house, which means that he could black-guard his victims into playing whether they wished to or not, besides being acquainted with many of the Border States men, who had flocked to New York to speculate in gold and stocks, McGrath was the "open sesame" that Johnny Chamberlain required. Together they started for New York, where they arrived in the winter of 1864. They soon discovered that, to obtain a desirable house in a suitable location, and fit it up, and furnish it in a manner fit to enable them to hold their own among first-class establishments of the sort, would require more money than Chamberlain could command. McGrath now induced two of the wealthiest sharpers in New York to enter into partnership with them. They bought a splendid residence near the Fifth Avenue Hotel, and fitted it up in so gorgeous and magnificent a style, that its equal had never been seen in the city, and I doubt if in any other. It is said that the furnishing and fitting up alone cost over sixty thousand dollars. It is reported that, within four months after the opening of the house, it made within the neighborhood of a million of dollars, and it is more than probable that such was the case. Among its patrons were wealthy contractors, high city officials, stock-brokers, and other speculators, many of whom were making their thousands per day in the exciting period of speculation, and some of them at a single sitting dropped against the two-card boxes of Chamberlain & Co. as high as fifty thousand dollars.

The firm did not get along harmoniously together, and a dissolution took place. McGrath and Chamberlain withdrew from it and the former returned to the blue-grass country in Kentucky, where he invested his money in a large stock farm. Johnny now opened an establishment on his own hook, fitting it up in the most extravagant style. This place, for which he paid an annual rent of \$8,000, was located on Twenty-fourth Street, near Broad-

way, one of the most fashionable localities in the city. The monthly expenses of running this establishment averaged \$4,000. On every night, except Sunday, a table might be found there, which, for the rarity, diversity, and choiceness of its viands, wines, and liquors, the elegance of its appearance, and the excellence of its cuisine, could not be surpassed by any in the world. This luxurious establishment and its *recherché* entertainments were kept up on the strength of a two-card box. The best any one ever yet received there was two cards, or "fifty-four," and he must be a very suspicious individual, indeed, who received as good. On opening his house he had to contend against the envy, and in many cases with the open enmity, of the proprietors of first-class "skinning-houses," who were jealous of him, and who used every effort and underhand method they could devise to prevent his success. But his indomitable energy and assurance overcame all obstacles and won the day. The proprietors and clerks of the principal hotels in the vicinity of his place were nearly all ropers-in for it, the majority without having the remotest idea of its character. He commended himself to the favor of many of the highest of the city officials, and his house became their resort, where the finest of wines and the choicest of luxurious feeding awaited them, with the hospitable smile of Johnny for a welcome. Beyond this, he has no entertaining qualities, for he is as ignorant as an ass of everything outside of his business. He is, however, wise enough to know when to hold his tongue, when to smile, and at whose jokes to laugh, and at a single glance can tell a "blood" from a "gray-back."

All his tribe, whenever they have established a foothold, their great desire is to gain a position on the turf, either by owning a stable of racers or having an interest in some race-course. It gives to them the aroma of respectability, and throws them into the company of wealthy persons whom they can rope into their "skinning dens," and there rob them. Johnny was by no means false to his order. He got up a racing association and opened a magnificent race-course at Long Branch, which is unsurpassed by anything of the sort in the country, and has proven itself a great success.

A year or so before he opened this course, he fitted up his magnificent "*Maison de Jeu*" at the Branch, which has been so

graphically described by our friend, the reporter. The season of its opening it cleared \$60,000, and in no season since has it cleared less than \$30,000. His friend, Henry P. McGrath, is again with him in this house, and comes, to rope-in for it, every season, from Kentucky. In addition to his other extravagances, Johnny keeps a steam yacht, in order that he may indulge his patrons with a sail down the bay, if they desire it, or take them on a fishing excursion, or clam-bake, whenever they fancy such a relaxation. Verily, reader, what do you think now of "splits and trumps being sovereigns"?

## CHAPTER XIX.

### SECOND-CLASS "SKINNING-HOUSES"

Are not generally fitted up and furnished in the gorgeous and magnificent style of those just described. Still, in New York, Philadelphia, and Washington, there are some splendidly decorated establishments of this kind. None of these, however, entertain their guests to suppers or refreshments of any kind, with the exception of liquors. Some of them, it is true, have tables set out and arranged handsomely, but they are only a sham, and no food is set upon them unless some extra fat customers are in one of the dens, giving up their money freely to a two-card box. In such a case a supper is ordered from some neighboring restaurant, and the verdant guests are fed and wined sumptuously; or it may sometimes happen that an important roper, having his eye on one or more fat "gulls," may desire to invite them round to the club to sup with him. In such a case a supper is duly ordered from the restaurant for the expected guests. But the only capital required to start a second-class skinning-house, or, as they are more generally termed a "brace game," is sufficient money to hire a room, put in a faro-table, a side-board, a dozen or two of chairs, and a carpet; but the latter luxury is sometimes dispensed with. The "brace" dealer needs not one dollar after he is ready to open his game. His rounds, two-card box, and case-keeper, is all the stock the bank requires. If some of these sharpers fit up and furnish their "bracc" rooms on a

grander scale than others, it is only to give to them a more respectable appearance. The "personnel" of a brace game consists of an "artist," a case-keeper, three or four "cappers," and some steerers or ropers; the last two of which frequently exchange roles, or act in either, as the case may require.

The head of this delectable concern is the master-sharper who furnishes the money for fitting up the room. He is generally a superior roper, and spends the greater portion of his time hanging about hotels, coffee-houses, billiard-rooms, and other public places, hunting up "suckers" for the purpose of decoying them to his den to be robbed. Next to him comes the "artist," whose duty it is to be at all times in the house, ready to operate on any "sucker" who may drop in accidentally, or be roped in by the attachés of the establishment.

The case-keeper is a man who keeps the case-box, and whenever the "artist" takes two cards, secretly marks it up. I shall here describe his duties, which stand second to those required of the "artist." Each card, as it is run off from the dealing-box, is marked by the case-keeper. Suppose two cards are "taken" as one, the top one only being visible; the result would be, unless there were some means of letting the case-keeper know what the card was, he could not mark it; consequently the swindle would be detected at the end of the deal. But the "artist" is equal to this emergency. On the lower right hand end of the losing cards, as the pack lies before the dealer in the box, the denomination is indicated by a dot precisely the same as I have described the dots in rounds on the winning cards. When the "artist" finds it necessary to pull two cards from the box at once, he does not know, before doing so, the name of the buried card. The moment the cards are dropped on the pile, the under card, being a trifle longer than that above it, reveals its name to the dealer by the dot on its corner. By a system of telegraphing, as laying one finger on the end of the box, or on its middle, or one at each end, or two fingers in various positions, he lets the case-keeper know the name of it, who quietly slips up the button while the eyes of the "suckers" are elsewhere.

"Ropers" or "steerers," and "cappers," as I said before, occupy interchangeable positions. A roper is a man who operates outside, and fishes for "suckers." His business is to capture some verdant individual, and decoy him to the "brace

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rooms." In ninety-nine cases out of every hundred, steerers and cappers for "brace games" are the most disreputable loafers in existence. They are men devoid of decency, honor, or a single redeeming quality. They are nearly always dead broke, and are so mean as to be despised by the proprietors of the "brace games," which they serve, and their "artists." During the day, they haunt bar saloons, billiard-halls, street corners, and low brothels. Many of them belong to the class described as "hangers-on" of the rougher class of gambling-rooms; and of all human beings, none are lower, meaner, or more contemptible. Occasionally, however, are to be found among them, men of good appearance, affable manners, capable of commending themselves to strangers, and these are the valuable decoys for "brace games." The "steerer" is perpetually on the look-out for verdant people who possess money. He frequents theatres, hotels, coffee-houses and other public places, for that purpose, and if he can find one whom he regards as a promising subject, he will use every endeavor to make his acquaintance. Frequently a game of billiards is proposed, and during its progress the acquaintance of the "sucker" is assiduously cultivated. The fifteen-ball pool-tables are favorite angling places for these gentry, and it is a rare thing to be about one without seeing a steerer engaged in play with some country merchant or other verdant fool with more money than brains, and who has consequently allowed the former fact to leak out.

When the "steerer" thinks matters are ripe for it, he carelessly remarks to his victim, "Well, I must quit; I've got to go around to the club house. I made a pretty good winning there last night, and they want a chance to get even."

The "sucker," having probably by this time imbibed liquor sufficient to make him feel a trifle reckless, and the remark about the winning having somewhat excited his cupidity and curiosity, he inquires, "What club house?"

"Oh," returns the steerer, "it's a place where a few gentlemen and board of trade men meet every evening, to have a little game."

The "sucker" thinks, where board of trade men and gentlemen meet must be all right, consequently he is all ready to answer affirmatively when the steerer says, "Won't you walk around? They have some mighty fine brandy there. You



needn't play. Let's go around and have a good drink of liquor, anyhow."

The victim thinks it looks all right. He'll go and see the elephant and get a drink; he needn't play, of course, unless he wishes. And so he accompanies the steerer to the "brace room."

Let us now take a peep into the brace room, while the steerer and his victim are on their way to it. The room is brilliantly lighted up. The "artist" sits behind the table, mechanically shuffling, cutting, and butting in, a pack of cards.

Scattered about the room, in various attitudes, are some half-dozen or more men—one or two of whom are asleep on the sofas—and several others playing casino, cribbage, or some game of the sort. The principal subjects under discussion are the merits of this or that prostitute, or perhaps one relates, in choice slang, garnished with an occasional oath, his exploits of the evening previous, and informs the company how much *I win*, never in any case using the word in a past tense. Possibly the conversation turns on the excellencies of this or that dealer, the exploits of trotting-horses, or any kindred subject. Their language is always slangy, indecent, and blasphemous. Presently there is a ring at the door-bell. The negro servant answers it, and one of the steerers enters alone, his single ring at the bell indicating that he had no victim.

After a moment or two the bell is again rung twice in rapid succession. Presto! In an instant everything is changed. The "artist" slides his cards into the box. The cappers gather round the table. Stacks of checks are passed to each of them, bets are put on the cards, the deal has begun; when enter the "steerer" from the billiard room, and his gull. "The gentlemen and board of trade men" are deeply engaged in playing.

The steerer takes a stack of checks and commences to play, while the sucker sits down behind him to watch the game. The former wins, of course. The cupidity of his victim is excited; he readily sees into the game if he did not before understand it, and begins to be anxious to win himself. The dealer grumbles occasionally about its being a bad night for the bank, and affirms, with an oath, that everybody's beating him. Some "capper" relates how a man went into some bank this afternoon with a \$5 bill and broke the concern, carrying off about \$2,500. A drink or two having been by this time administered to the

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"sucker," he is quite ready to acquiesce, when his "*friend*," the "steerer," passing over to him a stack of checks, addresses him with, "Here's ten dollars' worth of chips; put in another ten with it, and we'll try our luck together, by jingo! We'll go halves, win or lose."

The proposition is apparently a fair enough one. He puts in his \$10 and loses. He puts in then another \$10 to retrieve his first, and again loses, and continues to do so until he is cleaned out. When this is accomplished the "cappers" gradually withdraw, and the game breaks up.

A dozen of suckers may be playing at the same time, under the guidance of as many different steerers. A competent artist will manage that number as easily as one.

The game being ended, the steerer leaves the house with his fleeced victim, and, when he has shaken him off, which he does as soon as possible, he returns to the den for his division of the spoils. Ten per cent. goes to the case-keeper, forty-five per cent. goes to the bank, and forty-five per cent. to the "steerer," who brought the victim.

This is the division made, unless the "sucker" happens to be some influential person, and fleeced while drunk, and who, when sober, will "squeal" for his money. In such a case, the bank retains all the money for a few days, until they see what the victim intends to do. If he remains quiet, it is divided; if he "squeals," or threatens them with the law to get it back, it is returned to him, either in part or the whole, as he can be induced to settle.

The forty-five per cent. which goes to the house belongs to the proprietor; out of which he gives his "artist" his share, after the expenses of the establishment are paid. This worthy gets generally about twenty-five per cent. in second-class skinning-houses. The cappers get only whatever the bank chooses to give them, three or four dollars each, according to the length of time they were employed, and that only in a long game with heavy winnings.

All second-class skinning-houses use nothing but rounds and strippers. Not one of their proprietors would bank a game dealt by the best "fifty-four" player in the country. He *might lose*, and nothing could have a more disastrous effect on the internal economy of the keeper of a second-class skinning-house. They play for roped games; one half of the winnings go to the

"steerer," after ten per cent. has been deducted for the base-keeper, from the full amount fleeced from the victim. These houses are conducted on the same principle as when first established, thirty years ago, except they are furnished more gorgeously and the keepers of them have now less fear of intrusion from the police than formerly. They have discovered the strength of political influence, and themselves and their satellites generally vote in a body for such magistrates as they think likeliest to favor their thieving operations. It would be impossible to give anything like a correct estimate of the number of places of this sort at present in this country. Before the close of our civil war, it is possible that, throughout the country, as many as two hundred established robbing dens of this sort were in operation throughout the land, including both North and South; but at the present time probably not more than one hundred could be found. They increase and decrease according to the times, and more particularly with the amount of money in circulation. They are located exclusively in our large commercial cities. Small towns will not support a skinning game; but there are points of transient visits, whenever the sharpers learn of a place where any fat subjects may be found, that may be robbed with a two-card box. It is possible that the city of New York contains fifteen established second-class skinning-houses, that do not set suppers, and that do play for "roped games." These are located on Broadway or on the cross-streets not far from it, and always within a short distance of the first-class hotels. Philadelphia supports from four to six of these delectable institutions; Baltimore one or two; Boston, two or three; Washington City, during a session of Congress, from four to five; Richmond, two or three; Charleston, during the winter season, one; Savannah, two or three; Augusta, two; Atlanta, two; Montgomery, one; Mobile, four; New Orleans, from three to five; Memphis, two or three; Nashville, one or two; Louisville, four or five; Cincinnati, two or three; Indianapolis, generally two; St. Louis, from three to four; Chicago, about the same; Kansas City, two or more; Leavenworth, one; Omaha, one; St. Joseph, one; Denver, one or two; St. Paul, the same; Pittsburgh, Toledo, Columbus, Cleveland, Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, Saratoga, Albany, Providence, and other cities of the same size, have at least one "brace-house" each, and sometimes more, which depends on the moneyed "suckers" either

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#### SECOND-CLASS SKINNING-HOUSES.

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living or transiently stopping in them. Nearly every capital seat in the country can boast of at least one brace-house, during the session of the legislature.

The Pacific slope has been free from these nuisances during the last ten years, so also have the principal towns in our territories. This has been entirely due to the determined hostility shown towards the sharpers and their practices, by the gamblers resident in those places.

During the building of the Pacific Railroad, the sharpers followed it up step by step, from Omaha to Salt Lake City, and beyond, and in every mushroom town that sprung up along the route, like Jonah's gourd, in a night they built gambling-houses in which could be found nothing but thieving games. At one time, along the line of this road, at least three hundred sharpers were operating, with their ropers, cappers, and other stand-byes, all of whom were engaged in conducting such games or frauds as waxed card monte, snapper roulettes, marked cards "vingt-et-un," red and black lottery, and three-card monte. On all the railroads building at this time, or that will be commenced west of the Missouri and Mississippi rivers, are or will be found these pests of society, practicing their swindling arts on the unwary, and they will not cease to do so, until the legislatures pass severe laws for the purpose of punishing, as they deserve, frauds at gambling.

#### PATENT DEALERS OR ARTISTS.

Of the different methods of cheating at faro, none have been invented by sharpers, or even gamblers, but have principally emanated from the brains of mechanics. The fruits of their genius were eagerly seized upon by the sharper, the price paid being generally the furnishing of capital to test the new work, and division of the profits with the inventor, if successful.

The first requisite was a suitable person to work the invention. The inventor might create, and the sharper might fully understand the value of his production, and where it might be made most profitable; but neither were able to execute the necessary maneuvers, even on the most verdant player, not to mention a party of suspicious gamblers. At least no instance of the kind has ever fallen under my observation. There is scarcely to be found at the present time, a single keeper of a first or second-

class skinning-house, who can manipulate a two-card box, or, in fact, any of those tricks at *faro*, which are constantly in use there. These operators, or "artists," as they are termed, are, as a general thing, young men, some but little better than boys, but averaging from eighteen to twenty-five, who have been picked up and educated by master sharpers for this purpose. They are trained with the greatest care, until they are made perfect in the role required of them, and which they must play before an observing, and perhaps suspicious audience. The least lack of skill, the slightest want of confidence in themselves, or the most trifling mistake, would be certain to lead to the detection of the fraud. Plenty of men have learned the science of pulling two cards, shuffling, stripping, and stocking a trimmed pack to perfection, and can do it in an unexceptionable manner before those of their own ilk, but place them before even the most verdant, who are to be taken in by the maneuver, and they lose all confidence in themselves, and are totally unable to operate upon them. It requires years of constant practice for the most of men to become accomplished brace dealers. Occasionally, one reaches pre-eminence in his profession, in a year or so, but such is not often the case. Whenever one becomes more than commonly skillful, his fame soon spreads among those of his tribe, and he is eagerly sought after by the master-sharpers throughout the land.

The "artists" are generally taken from among the cappers, or case-keepers, if any of them show aptitude for the profession. At first these individuals demanded half the plunder, but as their numbers increased, their interest in the games they dealt gradually became smaller. They receive at the present time in second-class houses, from one-third to one-fourth of the profits, and in first-class houses, ten to fifteen per cent. In some aristocratic establishments, as for instance that of Chamberlain, at No. 8 Twenty-fifth street, and at Saratoga, they receive a fixed salary of \$75 per week with board and lodging. The increase in the number of these dealers, and the decrease in the number of houses of this sort since the war, has induced the boss-sharpers to take advantage of their artists in this respect, or, in other words, has compelled them to "*steal*" for wages.

These persons, or very few of them, outside their brace-dealing ability, have never shown any skill as card-players, and very

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little or no business capacity. Were they thrifty, they might be masters, instead of slaves in their profession; because their money could purchase them an equal interest in the frauds which they operate; but they are not. Money is a burden to them, and if they possess it, they are restless until they play it off against faro, or lose it in betting on horse-racing, or spend it extravagantly on themselves or abandoned women. They take no thought for the morrow, but literally leave it to take heed for the things of itself. Of the many who have sprung up since the invention of brace-dealing, not a dozen out of the number have had forethought enough to secure to themselves a home, or any provision against a rainy day; though among them are but few that might not have accumulated a handsome competency. When impoverished and out of employ, which, with them, are synonymous terms, they are the most miserable creatures on the face of the earth.

#### ROPER AND CAPPERS OF ARISTOCRATIC SKINNING-HOUSES.

These houses, as I have already mentioned, are always located in large cities, or crowded watering-places. At one time, during the war, New York supported as many as ten, and now can boast of four. Washington has every winter, up to 1870, supported from four to five, but the scarcity of moneyed suckers has induced them to sell out, and abandon the place in disgust, and "Ichabod" may now be written above their former grandeur. They are generally temporarily opened at the State capitals during sessions of the legislature, for the accommodation of such wealthy law-makers as desire to make or renew the acquaintance of the "tiger." Immediately after the war, three were furnished and fitted up in New Orleans, in the most gorgeous style, by some enterprising spirits who bore in mind the lavish manner in which wealthy merchants and planters had formerly dropped their money on the green tables, but these were now impoverished, and the sharpers soon discovered that a single house was all that city would support. Previous to the war, Charleston was every winter blessed with a magnificently appointed skinning-house, but since that little "unpleasantness," the sharpening gentry have found but thin grazing there, and have abandoned it entirely. Savannah still supports a fashiona-

ble den, which is considered one of the best paying institutions of the sort in the country.

For more than thirty years, Saratoga has supported a highly aristocratic *Maison de Jeu* of this species. During the war, as many as three flourished here, but the business is at present conducted by a party of sharpers who have monopolized everything in their line, to the utter exclusion of their brethren, and who have there built and furnished one of the most magnificent of these houses to be found in the world.

Of their artists and cappers, the former are paid from \$40 to \$75 per week, and the latter, as is everywhere customary, are dependent on the generosity of the bankers.

Newport has enjoyed for thirty years a skinning-house, which, if reports are true, has been a very profitable one to its owners. One of its principals, James Watson, died a short time since, leaving an estate worth about \$250,000.

It is only since the commencement of our civil war that a first-class house of this sort has been fitted up at Cape May, but every season the place was visited by nomadic sharpers from the large cities, who operated in their rooms at the hotels. But a party of prominent Philadelphia sharpers, seeing how popular the place was becoming as a summer resort, and the numbers who flock there during that season, at once divined how advantageous a business might be done there, and bought and magnificently furnished a residence for that purpose, where they entertain sumptuously such members of the moneyocracy as call upon them, for which they collect their score, with a two-card box.

Every aristocratic skinning-house has its aristocratic loafers to "cap" its games, who, from time to time, receive the acknowledgments of the proprietors, in the shape of a five or ten dollar bill. Occasionally, when employed for a long time, and the bank has made an unusually large stake, even twenty or twenty-five dollars may be given to each of them. As the case-keeper stands a grade higher, in these mansions, he is more munificently paid than these gentlemen; but in most houses he is entirely dependent on the generosity of his employer. In some, however, he receives a regular salary, as those houses I have mentioned in New York and Saratoga. The case-keepers and cappers are usually changed as often as once every month in order that their

continual presence about the game may not excite suspicion among its habitués. Aside from the proprietor of these brace games, their ropers are often lawyers, doctors, brokers, horse-dealers, merchants of all descriptions, hotel and coffee-house proprietors, and others engaged in public life, all of whom have undergone the ordeal of a two-card box before becoming such. These immaculate gentlemen are careful of their reputation, and allow none, except the proprietor of the house for which they are operating, to suspect their true calling. They seldom meddle with any, except those dupes who have their thousands ready and willing to hand over to a two-card box, and such as are certain to make no loud complaints after their losses. This class of fastidious ropers only introduce their victims to the dens, though they may, on some occasions, cap the game, by way of encouragement to their dupes to play. Half a dozen of these may meet in one of these houses, each with his "gull," without having the remotest suspicion of each other's calling.

The next on the list is the practical roper. He is a man who has been well raised and who moves in good society, and has an extensive acquaintance among business men, and men of wealth generally. He bets on races and on short games of cards with amateurs. He is fond of display, liberal with his money, of agreeable manners and easy address, and has such other accomplishments as will easily entrap men devoted to play or pleasure, and well calculated for seducing those who have no very particular leaning towards either.

When this class of ropers get on the scent of a victim, they are as untiring as a bloodhound. Should his standing at home not admit of his entering a gambling-house, your practical roper will follow his prey thousands of miles, if necessary, in order to land him inside some skinning den at last.

It is absolutely necessary that the proprietor of these houses should be widely known as a No. 1 sporting man, be the keeper of a fashionable club house, where he gives *recherché* suppers and the finest brands of liquors and cigars to his guests. The more widely himself and club house are known, the more profitable will be his business. It is vital to him, then, to cultivate the acquaintance of all who can in any respect benefit his house. In it may be found officials, from aldermen to senators, and all other grades who have the one thing here requisite—the almighty



dollar—and are willing to surrender it in sufficiently large quantities to the irresistible fascinations of the two-card box. They move generally among what society terms the respectable classes, and are frequently the associates and friends of wealthy men, whose presence in their establishment gives to it an air of respectability, and who frequently become ropers for it, and introduce good subjects, without for a moment suspecting its character.

A stranger, known to be rich, arriving in a city, is at once set upon by ropers. If neither these gentry nor the master sharper are acquainted with him, a mere introduction is all that is required. A champagne cork or two is puffed in the bar-room of the hotel, and, when the victim is sufficiently warmed up, he is invited round to the club house to take supper. Should the fastidious subject require more gentle treatment, a carriage is called and he is put into it and driven to the theatre, or perhaps the opera, and duly installed in one of the fashionable boxes. Perhaps neither music, the ballet, nor the histrionic is suitable to the taste of the honorable guest, and he prefers visiting one of the fashionable bagnios. Your roper and sharper is at home there; he knows all about the principal fancy houses, and is personally acquainted with all the inmates. Returning, the carriage drives up to the doors of the club house, into which the victim is duly escorted. After an excellent supper, and under the exhilarating effects of rich wines, he is marched into the gambling-room, where the brace-dealer sits, surrounded by his cappers, dealing his game, and the roulette wheel man is spinning his ball, as an invitation to play. The roper commences playing against the bank, having bought a hundred dollars' worth of checks, but does not urge his "friend" to play; and whether he does or not, he is treated with the same courtesy. Should he have but little money about him, and lose that, his generous host is quite willing to credit him with whatever amount he may wish to play against the bank.

Sharppers are selfish, crafty, and avaricious, and in no case are they ever moved by the liberal and generous impulses which characterize the true gambler. They are a privileged class of robbers, because legislation has as yet failed to devise any means for punishing their frauds. Whoever has the misfortune to come under their influence, they invariably rob, or use to carry out

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their nefarious designs upon others. Whenever they make any display of liberality, they are prompted by some selfish motive; and whenever they spend a dollar it is with the expectation of making ten. By the luxurious feasts which they spread nightly in their robbing dens, they manage to draw around them the wealthy and influential persons of the place where they are located, and obtain their countenance and protection. The public at large looks upon them as the leading sporting men of the country. Numbered among their nightly guests are astute lawyers and politicians, calculating bankers, brokers, and merchants, who regale themselves on the elegant suppers and choice wines of their host, without casting a thought to the problem of where the money is procured to meet the cost of such magnificence. Should it ever cross the mind of one of these sapient "gulls" to inquire how such gorgeous establishments are kept up, his question is answered by his friend, the gentleman-roper, "Oh! the 'splits' at faro are something enormous!"

Reader, the percentage of square faro does not reach two per cent., and it would require a play of at least £50,000 daily, to support such establishments as I have described; and I have grave doubts if any bank in the world has averaged, daily, for the space of six months, a play of \$20,000.

So conflicting are the interests of gamblers and sharpers, that if the former possessed the power, the latter would be so completely crushed out, that not a two-card box could be found in America. The breaking up of the skinning-houses in San Francisco, and their final extirpation from the Pacific slope, is entirely due to the efforts of gamblers. Every person robbed there was informed of their rascally practices, and urged to sue for his money back. Men were posted before the dens, to warn strangers about to enter them, of their character. The doors of square faro games were shut in the face of ropers. By these hostile measures, they were driven from the Pacific slope. Self-defense prompted them to pursue this course. So long as these swindlers were allowed to operate, they cast a taint on faro-banks in general. While gambling-houses were licensed in the city of New Orleans, the gamblers did all in their power to break up the skinning-houses; and succeeded, until the legislature, in 1836, repealed the act licensing gambling, which opened the way for again introducing the skinning games. The sharpers

hired private rooms to operate in, or used their rooms at the hotels, while their ropers were upon the streets or around the coffee-houses, billiard-rooms, and every other public place, picking up customers for them. When arrested for violation of the law, the money they fleeced from their victims bought off the police and informers, so that they could follow their calling with but slight risk. But the square gambler could not afford to run the risk of being arrested, the fine for dealing any game being \$1,000; and square faro cannot pay such fines.

Wherever the sharpers have obtained a foothold in a place, they have not failed to outgeneral the gamblers. Their extravagant entertainments bring them in contact with men in high places, to secure whose protection they launch out their money freely. Not, of course, by direct bribery; but by presents, and in many delicate ways covering the offensive odor of bribery; and sometimes by advancing a sum of money for electioneering purposes. The square gambling banker cannot afford to do these things, nor do one in fifty of them ever think of meddling in elections. The sharpers are greatly opposed to having square games near their skinning-houses, or, in fact, if they could prevent it, in the places where they are located. They fear their dupes may learn the difference between them, if given frequent opportunities of playing against the latter. The frequenter of the den of Johnny Chamberlain on Twenty-fifth street, who has been for years dropping his money against the bank, without the relief of a single winning, or even the gratification of seeing a friend win, will naturally become awakened to the fact that there is something strange in this perpetual ill luck, not only of himself, but in every case he has observed. When he changes his base, and alternates his visits between Johnny's and the square establishment at 818 Broadway, No. 12 Ann Street, or 8 Barclay, or any others of the square gambling places in the city, where, according to the mutability of the chances, he must frequently win, himself, and also see many of his friends win, whose knowledge of the art is no better than his own, his suspicions will probably be pretty thoroughly aroused, that he has been robbed scientifically and continually, in the aristocratic establishment of Chamberlain. In addition to this, the square gambler is always a source of uneasiness to the sharper, because he knows the former will warn his victims of the fraudulent

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character of his transactions, whenever he can. Under the Know-nothing regime in New Orleans, when the sharpers became more powerful than ever before or since, and it is to be hoped ever will be again, they raised every obstacle in their power to prevent the square games from being opened. In the winter of 1858, but a single game of square faro was open in the city; and that was located over a livery stable. The room was meanly furnished, and the limit was six dollars and a quarter, with a paroli to twenty-five dollars. At the same time there were fifteen bird supper (skinning) houses in full blast. So long as the Know-nothing party were in power in the city, the sharpers could depend on it for protection; for the reason that they gave money freely toward its support, and so long as they could exclude from the city, square houses, so long the charge of unfairness was less likely to be cast against them. Gamblers were the only persons they feared; and during the ascendancy of the Thugs in the city, were not only kept from opening their games, but from speaking against the sharpers, by dread of assassination. To illustrate how anxious were the sharpers to have the mysteries of their dens preserved from exposure, and their great desire that their dupes should learn nothing about the game of faro, that might lead them to suspect they were being foully dealt with at their places, I shall here relate a circumstance which occurred in the city of New Orleans in the winter of 1859. A party of sharpers from Richmond had opened a gorgeous establishment on Canal street. So far as their gambling relations, or the appearance of them, went, they conducted their house on a more liberal scale than any other of the sort in the city. When they could do no better they were willing to depend on the odd card which made the percentage fifteen per cent. more in their favor than in a square game. Or when the game had around it only small players, they frequently dealt it on the square. What they principally depended on was fleecing fat subjects who were roped into the den, or dropped in accidentally. To give their game every appearance of fairness they introduced cue-papers. Up to that time the keeping of the cards by pencil and paper was unknown in that city, or in any of the Southern States south of Richmond. This innovation created the greatest alarm among the skin-game sharpers there. A deputation waited upon the Richmondites, who were informed that too much money had

been spent to bring *gambling* up to its present standard and have it protected, to permit strangers to come into the place and teach customers how to protect themselves at *faro*. This warning was all-sufficient, and the papers were at once abandoned by the Richmondites.

The question no doubt arises in the mind of the reader, why, if the sharpers were so powerful in the city, they allowed any strangers to enter, and divide with them the magnificent harvest to be reaped there every winter with a two-card box. The answer is, jealousy. Mutual preservation united the sharpers against the Democratic party, which, while in power, never ceased to persecute them. Consequently, as soon as the Know-nothings had gained the ascendancy in the city, the sharpers, with one accord, were its steadfast upholders, both by their activity and their money. It was virtually the Know-nothings who destroyed the severe laws enacted against gambling, by wiping out that clause which gave one-half the fines to the informer. But if these worthies were fully protected in their robberies, a burning hatred and jealousy existed among them. Each was envious of the other's influence with the authorities, and only fear of exposure kept them on terms of decency and good behavior towards each other. For one sharper to be instrumental in breaking up the establishment of another was a dangerous experiment, as retaliation was sure to ensue. The law against gambling was severe, and still in full operation; but offered no bribe to informers, which was to the sharpers a protection. But should one of these, by underhand measures, break up the den of another, revenge would induce the party injured to go before the grand jury in the light of an informer. In this fratricidal war, every skinning deal in the city would be broken up; besides, whatever amount of hatred and jealousy might exist among them, they mortally feared detection of their frauds, which would be certain to ensue if they depended on a court of justice to revenge them, one upon another. These reasons, and only these, caused the sharpers to respect the rights of each other, but against square gamblers, who, having no particular influence there, wished to open square games in the place, they were, as a unit, hostile. They were prevented from opening their banks through fear of violence from the Thugs, who were hand in hand with the sharpers, and ready to commit any outrage at their

bidding. Just before the breaking out of the rebellion, when political excitement was engendering a hatred towards all persons of northern birth, some of the sharpers agitated a movement to have all their northern brethren expelled from the city. These resident sharpers had been compelled to look quietly on for the last few years, and see others from the North and West, fitting up gorgeous establishments, which far surpassed their own. The consequence was, that their own business was decreasing, and, blinded by jealousy and rage, they tried to have the new-comers driven from the State. Feeling ran very high, just then, against all persons of northern birth, and those who inaugurated the movement might very probably have succeeded, had not their activity in the matter been viewed by a portion of the skinning fraternity as a dodge of the expulsionists to increase their own interest and influence, and a suspicion that when the obnoxious northerners were gotten rid of, the next move of the expelling party, who were the wealthiest sharpers in the place, would be to crush them out, that they might have the monopoly of the skinning trade all to themselves. Nor were their fears entirely groundless, if one may judge from another move on the part of the expulsionists, a few months later. They offered a large sum to procure a bill, log-rolled through the legislature of Louisiana, licensing gaming, but confining it in New Orleans to three houses, each of which three houses should pay \$75,000 per annum for its license. The passage of such a bill would have thrown all the gambling in the city into the hands of four or five wealthy sharpers; but corrupt as was the Legislature of Louisiana, at that time, it dared not arouse the just indignation of all the decent people in the State, by the passage of such a nefarious law.

Self-preservation and mutual jealousy were the centripetal and centrifugal forces, which held the oligarchy of sharpers together in New Orleans for a period of nearly six years. When the Thugs were driven from the city, or, at least, the worst of them, this oligarchy fell asunder. Its support was gone. Nine square gambling-houses were established in the place within a month after that event, and in three months more but three skinning-houses existed in the city, and these were not paying their expenses.

## CHAPTER XX.

## SHARPERS.

It would seem that the fountain-head of all our social misfortune is the accumulation of wealth. In whatever country a few families have possessed themselves of the larger portion of the arable lands, the remainder have become their serfs. England, Ireland, and Scotland have, united, a population of about 28,000,000; out of this immense number, about 20,000 own the entire lands in the United Kingdom. The statistics of the population of Great Britain, taken a few years since, show that she has 1,039,000 paupers, and a moment's reflection will show that in the background of that immense army of want, as many more must be enduring their misery in silence. Wealth is the mother of pride, fraud, extortion, rapine, and cruelty. It has divided mankind into classes, set neighbor against neighbor and children against parents. It has ever tempted the cupidity of man, roused all that is worst in his nature, and created schools for the education of the sharper. Eighty per cent. of the cultivated classes worship the golden calf, and ignore the brotherhood of man; consequently, as they prey upon the rights of their fellows, they are nothing more nor less than sharpers. What are the myriads of priests, who lie soft, and fare sumptuously every day upon the sweat of the toiler, but sharpers? Or what are the hordes of lawyers, who live by fostering "man's inhumanity to man," and confusing the rights of property, instead of regulating them, but sharpers? The cultivated scoundrel, who finds his way into our legislative halls to give his voice in favor of a monopoly, which, while it brings wealth and power to a few, will bring want and misery to many, is only a sharper. That magistrate is but a sharper, who, dispensing justice with severity to the penniless and friendless, is yet leniently disposed towards the wealthy and influential. So long as the more cultivated and superior classes are permitted to use all their knowledge and powers of invention, for the purpose of enriching the few at the expense of the many, the human race can expect to be but little better than birds of prey, and "the beasts that perish." Since the attainment of wealth has become a virtue,

fraud has almost ceased to be a crime. "Had not I seized the prize, another would have done so," is the balm that quiets the conscientious scruples of the plunderer. Consequently, swindling and fraudulent transactions of all kinds have become every-day occurrences in all branches of trade and industry, and among all classes of society. In the breathless hurry-scurry scramble for wealth, few men are really strictly honest; they salve their conscience with the thought that when they have accumulated what riches they desire, they will be so, but as the passion for wealth increases with its accumulation, an honest man is about as hard to find as "pearls in ocean's midst."

What has caused all the sanguinary wars that have devastated countries, and left them hopelessly impoverished and enslaved? The desire of more possessions. Who brought about those wars but scheming sharpers? If we except the few noble souls who have seized the sword in order to free their country from the chains of the oppressor, like Spartacus, the Gracchi, Rienzi, Washington, Toussaint L'Ouverture, and Bolivar, the great mass of military heroes, in whose honor peans have been sung, and at whose feet the world has fallen down to worship, have been nothing more nor less than a set of cut-throats and plunderers.

Why then should we be surprised to find the sharper plying his trade under the guise of gambling? It is as natural to find him playing false cards, loaded dice, etc., as to find him selling his vote in the legislative halls, his decisions upon the bench, or buying up the necessities of life, in order to enrich himself upon the necessities of his suffering countrymen. These crimes are committed daily, and their perpetrators not only go unwhipped of justice, but the world considers them venial sins, to be winked at and passed over, for they sit in high places and roll in wealth, giving to their dear five hundred friends, sumptuous entertainments in splendid mansions, built from the fruits of their dishonesty.

Possibly, cheating at cards is coeval with the hazarding of money or its equivalent. That such unfair dealing should be viewed by the fleeced party as criminal, is but natural, and that they should punish the sharper, if able, is also quite natural, and he richly deserves it, for doing his work in such a bungling manner as to be detected; the main object being generally to wrest from him the plunder, and, after that is accomplished, to admin-



ister a sound drubbing to the offender. We frequently read of detected sharpers being thrown from windows or kicked down stairs in Europe by their irate victims; but I am much inclined to believe that one case of this sort has been magnified into hundreds by the writers. In this country it would be rather a dangerous undertaking to endeavor to throw one of these gentry from a window, who has been detected in his "little game." From what I know of the tribe, I should say they were but little disposed to stand such nonsense quietly, and the thrower might, before he was aware of it, find himself acting the role of the thrown. Offenbach will not allow Chalcas to give up but half the spoils, when the princes of Greece detected their high priest ringing in false dice upon them. Unveiled from the ruins of Pompeii, were found the skeletons of men around a gaming-table, the dice still clutched in their skeleton fingers, a speechless evidence that the Pompeians were in the habit of rattling the "blarsted nibs." From the writers of Rome we learn that gaming was extensively indulged in by all classes during the empire. Many of the emperors are reputed to have been gamblers. Caligula made of his palace a gambling-house for the nobility. We are told that Claudius hazarded about sixteen thousand dollars on the throw of a die, a large sum in those days. According to Horace, the cogging of dice was as well understood in the days of Augustus Cæsar as it is in the nineteenth century; and if many of the writers of the last two centuries are to be credited, in their time more sharpers than dupes existed in Europe. It is a great misfortune that many writers look more to their imagination for facts, than to historical records. At the present day, when I read the ridiculous stories relative to turning the tables on sharpers, ruined families caused by card-tables, blowing out of brains on account of losses incurred by gambling, millions won by black-legs, I conclude that the writers of the two latter centuries knew no more about the genuine sharper and his mysterious operations, than those of the present day. When cards were introduced into Europe, in the early part of the fifteenth century, there arose such a rage for gaming, and to such a fearful extent did it spread throughout the country, that it was quite natural that all good men should endeavor to check the vice. Charles VII of France issued an edict against it, but it had no effect in suppressing it. Many of the clergy traveled through the country

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preaching against it; but, as it was as prevalent among them as among the laity, their exhortations had little or no effect, nor could legislation check its growth. The most powerful weapon of the opponents of gambling was the accusation of swindling, and it was used so unsparingly by preachers, writers, and law-makers, that the uninitiated, in reading their records, are induced to believe that nothing was to be found in Europe except gambling-sharpers. Doubtless many existed in those days; we read, and know how they spring up in times of excitement; but I am far from being disposed to believe that so many ever existed in any one country at a time, as exists at this present day in our own, or that any sharpers ever existed who were so skillful in devising means of cheating at play, and putting their arts into practice, as those of the present day. England is the first country within my knowledge, that passed laws making cheating at gambling a punishable offense. During the reign of Queen Anne, that law was tacked on to an act prohibiting gambling, and as the document is rather a curious one, I quote from it, for the reader's edification: "The statute further enacts, that if any person cheat at gaming, and at any one time win more than £10, he may be indicted, and shall forfeit five times the value, and shall be deemed infamous, and shall suffer such corporal punishment as in case of willful perjury." Since the passage of the foregoing law, no sharper can pursue his calling in all the kingdom of Great Britain with impunity. Should he be detected in cheating, while playing at any game of hazard for money, he stands in danger of the law, and, upon conviction, may be consigned to a felon's cell. And to-day a similar fate awaits the detected sharper in every country in Europe worthy the name of civilized.

In the early days of our country, the existence of the sharper was not so pleasant as now. Running about the country with a fast quarter-horse to ring in upon farmers and the like; hiring the privilege of a race-track, and the while being obliged to keep a strict watch upon his cappers, dice-coggers, thimble-riggers, two-card pullers, strap players, trigger-wheel players, etc., lest they should sink on him—it was no easy task to watch and manage such a gang. Nor were his labors a whit less while traveling on a steamboat, with his gang of strikers plying their calling among the deck and cabin passengers. This line of business was

not in all cases pleasant while on these excursions, when we take into consideration that he ran considerable risk of being lynched, or set ashore in some wild cane-brake, should one of his strikers be caught in the act of chiseling some verdant passenger. Those rough days for the sharper are now over. He now may be found in his gorgeous club house, surrounded by every luxury and attendance for which the seensualist might wish. Instead of prowling about the country in search of victims, they quietly drop into his trap, or are roped in for him by his subordinates. Instead of being persecuted and driven from place to place by the officers of the law, they are now his friends and companions, and protect him in his swindling operations, or, if not quite that, are conveniently blind to his acts. The magnificent feasts which he spreads draw around him both the makers of laws and their executors, and he is more than repaid by their protection and the respectability which their presence adds to his house and calling.

When sanded cards were played out upon gamblers, and sharpers were forced to fall back upon greenhorns for support, they could obtain more of that stock by setting up a shop and waiting for them, than by running around the country in search of prey. At first they opened small traps in the by-streets, near the principal hotels, and frequently set up their games in their bedrooms at hotels, where their ropers brought their victims. From the opening of these dens dates the marshaling of our present army of ropers, cappers, case-keepers, and artists, under the command of our leading sharpers.

For many years the gamblers of this country lagged far behind their brethren in Europe in the fitting up of costly gambling establishments. At the beginning of the present century the gambling-hells of London were fitted up in extraordinary style. The furnishing alone of Fishmonger's Hall is said to have cost £40,000. Previous to 1837 all the gambling-rooms in this country were fitted up and conducted purely on the democratic principle. Such articles as carpets, curtains, or a side-board, were entirely unknown there. Even chairs were scarcely tolerated. They were usually located on some back street or alley, and frequently in a cellar. To furnish these, it only required some chairs, and a few tables and benches, and to strew the floor with sand or sawdust. No liquors nor drinks of any sort were furnish-

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ed by the proprietor, except a pail of cold water. Many of them were, however, located convenient to some rum-mill, from whence refreshments could be ordered. Besides faro-banks, could be found those of roulette, chuck, vingt-et-un, etc. To these places all sorts of characters had entrance during the hours devoted to play, and to preserve order at least one bully was maintained on the premises.

When men wearing polished boots and boiled shirts were too exclusive to play in company with the "great unwashed" at faro or roulette, private games were opened for their convenience in the hotel or some other convenient place. As the people grow prosperous their Spartan virtues gradually retire from the field and allow luxuries to creep in upon them. How should gamblers be expected to escape its insidious approach? Their patrons demanded private rooms, decently furnished, in order that they might not be jostled by the unclean, the uncouth, and the ruffianly. The first genteel gambling-rooms fitted up in this country were opened in the city of New Orleans, under the old license law. These were closed in 1836, and shortly afterwards a respectably furnished gambling establishment was opened in Richmond. After the suppression of gambling in New Orleans, Mobile became the favorite gaming place in the South; and as early as 1837 several finely furnished rooms were opened there. That is to say, they were furnished with carpets, curtains, side-boards, etc. The games played in these rooms were principally faro and roulette, and all genteel-looking persons were permitted to play at them. The rooms in which faro was secretly dealt, in the French quarter of the city of New Orleans, after gambling was suppressed by law, were usually fitted up tastefully, if not extravagantly. But at this time, excepting these and those mentioned as in Mobile, and one or two in Richmond, but very few rooms, where square faro was dealt, were decently furnished, in the whole United States. The faro-rooms in large cities like New York, Boston, Philadelphia, St. Louis, Cincinnati, and Louisville, were of the most primitive description, located in the rear of some doggery, in by-streets, and frequently in cellars. In such places would congregate men of nearly every grade and calling, for the purpose of "bucking the tiger." Near the close of the Mexican war, gamblers in the Northern and Western States began to take an interest in fitting up, for the accommo-

dation of themselves and their patrons, respectable faro-rooms. If these cities had handsomely furnished rooms for dealing square games of the kind before 1845, I can find no evidence of the fact; and I think the same assertion may safely be made regarding the cities of Louisville, Cincinnati, and St. Louis. The custom of setting meals, adopted by all first-class skinning-dens and many square houses in our larger cities, originated under the old license law in New Orleans. These establishments had their kitchens and tables for the accommodation of the proprietor and his employes. Plain, but substantial dinners, with claret wine, were served every afternoon at three, to which the proprietor was in the habit of inviting many of his friends and patrons. After the suppression of these houses, many of the faro-rooms run by stealth in the French portion of the city, through the connivance of the police, gave to their guests gratuitous dinners and suppers. The custom was adopted by some of the Mobile gamblers, and shortly by a few houses in Baltimore and Richmond. None of the gamblers operating in the Eastern or Western cities furnished meals to their patrons previous to 1855. I believe the first attempt of this kind was made in the city of New York. None of the faro games dealt on the Pacific Coast ever set a table, with one exception. When Stephen Whipple opened his magnificent establishment in the city of San Francisco, he gave to his patrons both dinners and suppers of the finest kind. But within his gorgeous rooms no professional gambler was allowed. No other square game, on the Pacific slope, since the discovery of gold, has ever furnished meals to its patrons.

The first fashionable skinning-house was opened in Washington in 1832, by two sharpers named Pendleton and Marshall. The former was a native of Winchester, Va., and, as a sharper, stood pre-eminent. For more than twenty years he conducted a fashionable house in Washington, and the remarkable success with which he met must be attributed to his own peculiar talents. Poorly raised and worse educated, he had still acquired the manners of a perfect gentleman, and had a way of ingratiating himself with such wealthy persons, and those of influence, as were devoted to play and pleasure. The magnificent display which he made, and the celebrity of his table, which, for rare viands and choice wines, was not surpassed by those of the weal-

thiest in the land, rendered his house, during a session of Congress, the resort of the rich, the eminent, and the powerful. Mr. Marshall, the confidential artist of Pendleton, was a native of Kentucky, and I shall here close the mortal career of this gentleman, as far as I am concerned, by stating that he made ten fortunes while with Pendleton, of all of which he got rid, either by the most reckless extravagance, or bucking at faro, and finally died a miserable drunkard in his native State. They also planted Pendleton, a short while previous to the rebellion, and, though a reckless spendthrift, and an extravagant liver, he left to his widow an ample fortune.

The success of Pendleton's trap incited the sharpers of Maryland and Virginia to come and do likewise. Consequently, from 1833 up to the present time, the office-holders, office-seekers, lobbyists, claimants, strangers, and their high mightinesses of both houses of Congress, have had every winter from two to eight skinning-houses in which to loaf, sup, and be fleeced of their money, whenever they played the unequal game against the two-card box.

Fashionable houses of this sort were about this period opened in Richmond and Baltimore. From these cities the sharpers extended their operations to Philadelphia, where they opened one or more in the summer of 1836, but they received such bad treatment from the roughs and black-mailers in that city, that they were forced to abandon their enterprise. Between the years 1844 and 1845 they obtained a foothold there, and since that period Philadelphia has never been without two or more fashionable skin games.

In the year 1840, an Irishman named Pat Hearn fitted up, in Barclay street, New York, a splendid suite of apartments for that purpose, where he entertained his customers with suppers of the "bird" style, and "braced" them to pay the expense. From the best information I can get, I believe this to have been the first skinning-house opened in New York. Hearn, before his advent in New York, was employed in a notary's office in New Orleans, but his profligate habits and passion of gaming caused him to lose his situation. After spending a year or two loafing around the licensed gambling-houses in the place, the proprietors of one of them gave him a situation to attend at one of the games, where he remained until public gaming was suppressed. While there

employed, he made the acquaintance of many of its wealthy patrons. Having received a good education, and being a man of polished manners, with a social and genial disposition, and having, withal, a large stock of rollicking Irish humor, he commended himself to all with whom he came in contact, and those fond of play and fast living found in Pat Hearn a congenial companion.

Some proprietors of private skinning-dens in the place saw in Hearn a valuable roper, and at this business he soon recruited his fortunes, and lived in the most extravagant style until he came to New York, where he was allowed, almost without interruption, to carry on a skinning-den for about twenty years.

Meantime, during that interval, many sharps fitted up fashionable skinning-houses in the city, and conducted them with various success. Some were closed for want of patronage, while others were broken up from receiving frequent interruptions from the rowdy element; and not a few were compelled to close by the extortionate black-mailing of the police. Through all the years, however, Pat Hearn maintained his position, and weathered every political storm, by his native tact. His superior roping and entertaining qualities filled his den with fat subjects belonging to the more intellectual and wealthy classes. His genial manners, profuse liberality, and off-handed way, made him a favorite with the rowdy element, and they gave to him their support. The money and presents which he secretly distributed among the chiefs of the police force in his ward, ensured him against interruption from these satellites, while he compromised with all black-mailers who tried to prey upon him, sooner than allow their snares to draw him within the meshes of the law. Notwithstanding his extravagant habits, at his death, which took place in 1860, Hearn managed to leave his widow about \$30,000.

The first gorgeous skinning-palace opened in New York, which could bear any comparison to those at present located there, or those at Long Branch or Saratoga, was fitted up by a company of sharps in 1853. This magnificent establishment was christened "The Crystal Palace," and it is reported that a fabulous sum was expended in furnishing and fitting it up. It was placed under the charge of Mr. Pendleton, himself a large shareholder, who could afford to give it his whole attention when Congress was not in session.

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The house did not at first take well, and would probably have proved a failure, had it not met with a rich subject in a cashier of one of the city banks. This defaulting gentleman dropped in the house, at various plays, about \$70,000. Expecting, no doubt, to make his losses good, he requested Mr. Pendleton and his associates to keep his losses from the public, but the "swag" was too big. The first desire of a sharper is to acquire money; the next, to let the world know of his acquisition. The cashier was arrested, and his employers sued the "Crystal Palace" for the stolen money. But Pendleton ran off to Washington carrying it with him, and the sharpers secured their prize, but, in consequence, the "Crystal Palace" was broken up by the authorities.

It was about the commencement of the rebellion that the fashionable dens of New York first acquired an assured foothold in that city; and, since then, they have been able and have bidden defiance to the attacks, both of the police and black-mailers, being protected by the higher city officials. During the last decade, all the proprietors of these places have become wealthy, though always living in the most extravagant manner. Several of them have either country-seats or finely stocked farms within a short distance of the city, while others live in palatial city residences, supporting the most extravagant style. A few have stables of racers or trotters, while some are managers and large shareholders in some of the popular race tracks around the city.

The first skinning-house of which Boston ever could boast, was opened there in 1844, and conducted by a man of the name of Lyman Brittain, with the assistance of three or more other sharpers. Their houses proved a success, and induced others to try their fortunes there, by opening and conducting similar establishments. Those who failed did so more from want of patronage than any hostility shown towards them by the authorities. In no place in this country have such places been better protected by those honorable bodies than in Boston. Mr. Brittain run his house in Boston until about 1864, when he went to New York, and identified himself with one of the most aristocratic establishments of the kind there.

Two years afterwards the worthy gentleman handed in his chips, which disastrous event was caused by sizing up too heavily against the brandy bottle.



I have already stated the manner in which the sharpers followed their calling subsequent to the repeal of the law permitting public gaming in New Orleans, and the manner in which they kept their games and caused suckers to be roped to them in by-streets or in their sleeping-rooms at the hotels. When sued for the money or spotted by informers, the matter was generally compromised. If the haul was a large one and fears were entertained that the victim might "squeal," the sharpers took a lake or river steamer, and left the city for a few days till the affair had time to blow over. In this underground manner they conducted their business for about twenty years, without once attempting to open a fashionable skin-game. The first of the kind opened there was in the winter of 1853, and was superintended by a sharper from Tennessee, named Allen Jones. The greatest care was taken not to let what went on within the house become known to the outside barbarians. This institution, during the winter, cleared for its owners about \$55,000; a young Portuguese Jew, a banker in the place, having lost \$30,000 of the money. The following winter, Jones and some of his compeers subscribed several thousand dollars, and with it caused the obnoxious anti-gambling law to be stripped of its most dangerous and odious feature, that which gave to the informer one-half the fine. In the winter of 1854 two additional skinning-dens were opened in the place, to add dignity to the city of New Orleans, and all met with the most encouraging success. Sharpers now gathered from nearly all parts of the earth to that city, and vied with each other in the fitting up and furnishing of magnificent establishments. New Orleans being at that period renowned for its market, no finer tables could be found in the world than such as were nightly set out in these houses. It was considered a poor season with one of these when it did not clear \$40,000, and some of them have been known to make in the neighborhood of \$100,000 during a single winter. It was during these lively times for sharpers that houses were opened in Cincinnati, Louisville, and Chicago, but neither of these cities were able to support more than one or two of them before the rebellion. I believe that during the years of 1863, 1864, and 1865, Cincinnati never supported less than three, and sometimes as many as five or six. The sharpers were afraid of starting such houses in Louisville, Nashville, or St.

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Louis, during the war, these cities being in a great measure under military rule, and, to the credit of the military authorities be it said, they showed no mercy to sharpers, while they in no way interfered with regular gamblers. The military detectives found out the character of each game dealt within their stamping ground, and swindling sharpers and their operators were not tolerated. Many were arrested in Louisville, Nashville, Memphis, and St. Louis, and other places where military authority prevailed, after they had opened their houses, and some of them were imprisoned for months, and not a few set to work on the fortifications. Small wonder if, after that, they and all their ilk kept strictly beyond the power of military authority. But scarcely a town or city of any size existed, during the war, in the East or West, which did not support a skin-game. I believe that Chicago had at no time less than three, and some of the time six of these, which were furnished in the most extravagant manner, and all of which kept the most luxurious tables.

That the reader may have some idea of how openly the swindling transactions of which I have spoken are carried on, and in what a barefaced manner the articles which I have described are offered for sale, I append the following copy of a circular which is publicly sent out, accompanied by the little book therein mentioned, containing fac-similes of the backs of the marked cards.

## [CUT OF EAGLE.]

He either fears his fate too much,  
Or his deserts are small,  
Who dare not put it to the touch,  
And win or lose it all.

E. M. GRANDINE, 41 LIBERTY STREET, NEW YORK,

*Manufacturer and Dealer in Advantage and Marked-Back Play-  
ing Cards, by which you can tell the size and suit,  
by the Back as well as the Face.*

EVERY STYLE OF BACK CONSTANTLY ON HAND.

These cards are an exact imitation of the fair Playing Cards in use, and are adapted for Bluff or Poker, Seven-up, Forty-five, Euchre, Cribbage, Vingt-et-un, or Twenty-one, Loo, and all other games of cards, where knowing just what your opponent holds in his hand would enable you to win. Square and Marked

Cards cut to order for Stocking Hands, for every game. Also Faro-boxes, Lay-outs, and Tools. Roulette-Wheels, Keno-Sets, Ivory Goods, Rouge-et-Noir or Red and Black, Roulette, Feather and Anchor, Over and Under Seven, Eight and Ten Dice, and Faro Cloths, and every variety of Sporting Implements and Materials.

My cards are now issued on a quality of board, which, though in exact imitation of the Square Cards of the same patterns, is, in toughness and elasticity, but little if at all inferior to a Faro Dealing Card, and unequaled by anything to be obtained in this country in the way of Marked Cards. I have the greatest variety of styles, and have them *perfect*, both in mark and finish.

Faro Boxes, Tools, and all other goods herein advertised, are of the very best quality, and parties wishing goods for practical use, will do well to favor me with their order. Especially is this true of those wishing to purchase Faro Checks. There are various concerns who are selling Checks made from green, unseasoned ivory, which are almost entirely worthless. Especial attention is paid to this department, and my Checks are made from the very best seasoned and finest quality of ivory imported.

Full and explicit directions for reading and using will be sent with all Cards and Tools. Should you wish for Cards, state the style of back as per sample-book accompanying, and they will be forwarded to *any* address.

#### SPECIAL NOTICE.

Any of these goods will be sent by express C. O. D. (collect on delivery) if so desired, express charges at the purchaser's expense. When Goods are ordered C. O. D., to the amount of over \$20 and less than \$100, a deposit of 15 per cent. must accompany the order by mail, *registered*, if at my risk, and for \$100 a deposit of 10 per cent. This is to secure freight expenses in case the goods are not taken by the persons ordering, and this rule will not be departed from. No goods sent to the Territories C. O. D. in less amounts than \$25. Orders for less amounts must be accompanied by the money.

Customers will bear in mind that in the following price-list, where the price of single packs are given, they will be sent closely sealed, postpaid, for that price. The price per dozen is net; freight at purchaser's expense.

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The price per dozen is

# SHARPERS.

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Parties living at a great distance, where the express charges  
would be very heavy, can have their cards sent by mail by the  
dozen or half-dozen, by remitting, in addition to the price per  
dozen, \$3 extra for postage, on each dozen packs, and I will  
guarantee safe delivery.

I hold myself responsible for all money sent by registered let-  
ter, also postal money orders.

## PRICE LIST OF MARKED CARDS.

Per pack, any style on sample sheet, postpaid by mail,	\$1.25
One dozen by express for	10.00
Two dozen " " "	18.00
Three doz. " " "	26.00
Six dozen " " "	43.00
One gross " " "	85.00

## DEALING, SQUARE, AND ADVANTAGE CARDS.

	PER PACK.	PER DOZ.
Hart's Linen Eagle Faro Cards, squared for dealing,	\$1.50	\$15.00
The same cut in any form, either wedges, rounds, and straights, or end rounds,	3.00	30.00
Spanish Monte Cards,	75	6.00
Ordinary Cards, cut for strippers, brief, or any other style,	1.25	9.00
Three-card Monte Tickets,	1.00	8.00
Flag-backs, marked, per pack,	1.50	12.00
Any of the above cut for strippers, 50 cents per pack extra, or \$3 per dozen.		

## FARO BOXES AND TOOLS.

Square Dealing Faro Box, German Silver, extra heavy silver plate,	\$25.00
Two-card Faro Box, top sight tell, improved lever, best in use,	60.00
Back up, second card box, for Red and Blacks,	35.00
Card Press without cover,	6.00
Card Press with slide cover, compartment for dealing- box, lock and key,	10.00

Card Press same as above to hold a dozen packs, double,	\$14.00
Card Punches, steel,	4.00
" " silver, with hinge,	10.00
Trimming Shears, double edged cutter,	35.00
Knife, small,	20.00
" large,	50.00
Stripper Plates, to use with knife, per set	5.00
Case-keeper, Cards, Wooden Markers,	12.00
" Composition Markers,	15.00
" finest painted Ivory Markers,	25.00
Check Racks,	5.00
" small,	4.00
Card Box, to hold Checks, Dealing-box, Cards, Case-keepers, Card-racks,	50.00
Shuffling Board,	2.00
Ruled Cue-papers, or Faro Tabs, per hundred,	1.50
" " " per thousand,	12.00

## BROADCLOTH AND OILCLOTH SPREADS.

Broadcloth Faro Lay-outs, best quality,	\$18.00
" " " mounted on board,	23.00
" " " on fold-up board,	25.00
Enameled Oilcloth Faro Lay-outs,	10.00
Broadcloth Roulette Lay-outs, 7 feet by 4½ double,	50.00
Enameled Oilcloth Roulette Lay-outs, 3 ft. by 3 ft. 9 in.,	10.00
Red and Black or Rouge et Noir Cloth, large,	18.00
" " size Faro Lay-out,	14.00
Eight-Dice Cloths,	16.00
Ten-Dice " "	20.00
Feather and Anchor Cloths. Emblems—horse head,	
anchor, feather, game cock, leaf, and star,	10.00
Mustang or Horse Head Cloths. Emblems—horse head,	
anchor, club, spade, diamond, and heart,	10.00
Sweat Cloth, large gilt figures,	5.00
Over and Under Seven,	5.00
Different styles of above painted to order, same price.	
Old Faro Cloths repainted for	8.00

## BOND.

Checks, double,	\$14.00
" " " "	4.00
" " " "	10.00
" " " "	35.00
" " " "	20.00
" " " "	50.00
" " " "	5.00
" " " "	12.00
" " " "	15.00
" " " "	25.00
ers, " " " "	5.00
" " " "	4.00
Cards, Case-	
" " " "	50.00
" " " "	2.00
red, " " "	1.50
sand, " " "	12.00

## COTH SPREADS.

" " " "	\$18.00
board, " " "	23.00
board, " " "	28.00
" " " "	10.00
4 1/2 double, " "	50.00
ft. by 3 ft. 9 in.,	10.00
large, " " "	18.00
" " " "	14.00
" " " "	16.00
" " " "	20.00
ns—horse head,	
nd star, " " "	10.00
ms—horse head,	
heart, " " "	10.00
" " " "	5.00
" " " "	5.00
to order, same price.	
" " " "	8.00

## SHARPERS.

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## FARO CHECKS.

	FIRST QUALITY.	SECOND QUALITY.
1 1/4 inches, plain engraving, per hundred	\$32.00.	28.00
19-16 " " " "	35.00.	30.00
1 1/2 " " " "	37.50.	32.50
1 1/4 " fancy engraving " " "	35.00.	30.00
19-16 " " " "	37.50.	32.50
1 1/2 " " " "	40.00.	35.00

Complete Faro Kits per set, - - - - - \$80.00

Comprising the following: Extra heavy plated Dealing-box, 600 1 1/4 inch Composition Ivory Checks, 1 Oilcloth Lay-out, 1 Case-keeper, 1 Check Rack, and 1 Card Press.

Composition Ivory Checks, per set, - - - - - \$30.00

Per hundred, for any less than set, - - - - - 6.00

The above comprise in each set 600 1 1/4 inch Checks: 300 white, 200 red, 100 blue, with Markers, Coppers, and Splits, in neat fitting box, and the same as sold by other parties for \$50 per set.

## POKER CHIPS.

Parties sending for Poker Chips will please specify the number wanted of each color.

Ivory, size 1 inch, per hundred,	\$10.00
" " 1 1/4 " " "	12.00
" " 1 1/2 " " "	14.00
Composition Ivory, 1 1/4 inch, will size up	4.00
Bone, cut to measure or to size up, 1 inch, per hundred,	3.00
" " " 1 1/4 " "	5.00
" " " 1 1/2 " "	7.00
" " " 1 3/4 " "	9.00
" " " 1 1/2 " "	12.00

## DICE, ETC.

Set loaded Dice, best Ivory, 9 Dice, 3 high, 3 low, 3 square; warranted sure, exact imitation of common	
Dice, " " " " " "	\$5.00
Set 3 High or Low Dice, " " " " " "	2.50
Three Square, to match, " " " " " "	1.00

Feather and Anchor Dice, $\frac{1}{4}$ inch, per set, \$10.00.	1 inch, \$14.00
Mustang or Horsehead Dice, $\frac{1}{4}$ inch	" 10.00. 1 " 14.00
Box for throwing above for $\frac{1}{4}$ inch Dice	" 2.50. 1 " 4.00
Rondo Balls, eight in set, size $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch	- - - - - 6.00
" " " $1\frac{1}{4}$ "	- - - - - 8.00
Eight-sided Top Dice, that you can spin high or low, and force your opponent to spin as you desire,	- - - - - 2.50
Dead Props per set, 9 in set,	- - - - - 12.00
Square Props, 4 in set,	- - - - - 2.50

## KENO.

Consisting of Globe and Stand, Proof-board, 100 Cards, 90 boxwood Balls,	- - - - - \$45.00
Keno, very handsome finish, consisting of Globe and Stand, Proof-board, 20 Cards, best style, Tally-board, 90 boxwood Pegs, and 90 boxwood Balls, medium size,	- - - - - 80.00
Same as above, with best Ivory Balls,	- - - - - 100.00
Extra large size, same as above, with best Ivory Balls,	- - - - - 125.00
Boxwood Balls,	- - - - - 100.00
Keno Cards, per set of 200, 3 rows figures,	- - - - - 25.00
" " " 100, 9 " "	- - - - - 18.00
" " " 50, 18 " "	- - - - - 18.00
" " " 200, 3 " "	- - - - - 15.00

## SPECIALTIES.

The Sleeve Machine, for holding out, or playing extra cards, the most perfect piece of mechanism ever invented for this purpose. This article works in the coat-sleeve noiselessly, admits of holding the hands in the most natural manner, requires no false movements, and weighs about *four ounces*. This article is manufactured by no other firm in this country, and is guaranteed to be all it is advertised. Price, with full directions for use, \$35.00.

Right and Left Snap Roulette Wheel, small, for high or low numbers, 6 inch center. price \$20.00.

The Breastworks, or "vest hold-out," concealed in vest front, and worked by the foot with spiral coils and catgut. Price \$25.00.

COND.

\$10.00. 1 inch, \$14.00  
10.00. 1 " 14.00  
2.50. 1 " 4.00  
- - - - 6.00  
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d, 100 Cards, \$45.00  
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- - - - 80.00  
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small, for high or low

concealed in vest front,  
ills and catgut. Price

#### BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES.

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The "Bug," a contrivance for playing an extra card, utterly defying detection, price \$1.00.

This accommodating gentleman, after enumerating many more articles, under the head of sundries, but with which we have nothing to do, they being articles in legitimate use in various games, and several books on games and the manly art of self defense, informs his patrons that all his business is confidential, and appends his full name at the end of his circular with as much confidence as if the articles which he advertises were an inestimable boon to his race.

#### CHAPTER XXI.

#### BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES.

It has become the custom of newspaper and magazine writers, when they have designs on the pockets of some wealthy individual, to treat their readers to a biographical sketch of the victim, enumerating his virtues, and endeavoring to force upon the world at large the idea that he is a benefactor to his race. If the subject of their adoration be possessed of any vices, these they are careful to keep in the background, and if he has oppressed and impoverished many, while feathering his own nest, a discreet silence is kept on that point also.

These sketches generally commence: "Of all the remarkable men of our age," or, "One of the self-made men of our times." As it is my intention to marshal before my readers a few of the most prominent sharpers of the day, I shall class them also as "the self-made men of our times." All sharpers, or nearly all, are essentially self-made men. Most of them have sprung from the lower, and, in many cases, the lowest order of society. The majority have not received even a common school education, and not one in ten, in their boyhood, had any moral training. Some of them have schooled themselves, after arriving at manhood; but many are entirely destitute of any education whatever. I shall now introduce to my reader,



## MR. ELIJAH SKAGGS.

He was born and raised in the backwoods of Kentucky, near the northern line of Tennessee. In this section, book-learning sunk into the veriest insignificance, before the knowledge of the high arts of card-playing, cock-fighting, and running quarter horses, and the butchering of one's neighbors, in the most scientific manner. Here had the Vendetta reigned a hundred years, and the only law in force, that of the bullet and the bowie-knife. The Skaggs family, which was a numerous one, cultivated a small farm, from which they extracted sufficient hog and hominy to keep them from starvation. The only member whose ambitious soul soared above these sordid pursuits, or showed any particular genius, was Elijah, the subject of this present sketch. He was a steady, sober, and industrious youth, who disliked strife and avoided all roistering company. He was inordinately fond of money, and looked with a keen eye about him to see where it was to be made. In the region round about where he lived, there was more money to be made in gambling than anything else; consequently, young Skaggs studied the science of card-playing, and, at the age of twenty years, knew considerably more about a pack of cards than a plow. By his prudent habits, combined with his skill at cards, he managed to accumulate, from among the boys in his neighborhood, about two thousand dollars, a large sum in those parts, even for so aspiring a youth as young Skaggs. But it was not to be expected that so much genius should confine itself to a small, half-civilized settlement in the backwoods of Kentucky. A thousand times no! So Mr. Skaggs shed his butternuts, and bought a suit of store clothes, and left the roof of the paternal Skaggs. He appeared in Nashville, dressed in a frock-coat and pants of black broadcloth, a black silk vest and patent leather boots, a white shirt with standing collar, and around his neck was wound a white choker, while, resting on his cranium, was a black stove-pipe hat, which completed his attire. His long, attenuated, and awkward frame, together with his solemn young face and demure habits, created quite a sensation in the town, and caused him to be nicknamed the "preaching faro-dealer."

For twenty years and upwards he never changed his style of dress. In the earliest days of California, when nearly every one

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dressed in the rough, Skaggs still held on to his clerical style, and his appearance in a mining camp was the cause of considerable stir and merriment among the miners, which was only surpassed by their astonishment when he proceeded to open a faro or monte bank, instead of a prayer-meeting, as they had anticipated.

The rude jokes made upon his personal appearance, and the sarcastic reflections cast upon his habits, passed Mr. Skaggs like the idle wind that blows. He wanted money, and he knew he could make it, by his ability and industry.

He soon discovered the inconvenience of the want of education, and the year after that in which he had launched himself on the world, hired a schoolmaster to accompany him in his travels while in search of faro-players, and thus picked up a good business education.

In the meantime he made himself acquainted with the different arts in vogue among sharpers for fleecing the unwary. He possessed no inventive faculty, but had a keen sense for detecting any unnatural deviation at play, and whenever his suspicions were aroused, would watch for hours with the patience of a sleuth-hound, never drawing on himself the suspicion that he was spying upon them. If successful in unraveling the mystery, as soon as the game was broken up he called aside the principal sharper putting the trick in practice, and forced him to divide his future play with him. If unable to detect the fraud, he tried to purchase the secret, and, if successful, when in possession of it he confined himself strictly to his room until he could play it to his satisfaction, and when it came to fraudulent schemes for robbing players at faro, but few better executors than himself could be found anywhere.

It is said that he watched a sharper manipulating "tie-ups" upon his customers, for several nights, without being able to discover the nature of the trick. He was convinced that a deception existed, from the unnatural movements of the hands of the artist while shuffling the cards; but more from their strange manner of running, more particularly, the last four cases on a deal losing, while the double cards were winning, and this occurred only when the operator took a fresh pack of cards. Even this knowledge he could make profitable, by betting on the double cards remaining in the box, at the close of all deals made with a fresh pack, and thereby winning several hundreds before

the sharper should drop on him. But Mr. Skaggs scorned to take such a mean advantage of a brother sharper; besides, the trick, once in his possession, would be a hundred-fold more valuable to him. Therefore, having failed to detect the nature of the fraud, he sought an audience with the manipulator, and said to him, "You're working on your players. I've been for some time trying to find out what you are doing. Now I want to buy that trick; you may just as well sell it to me, because if you don't I'll follow you up everywhere you go, till I do find it out, and I'll play against your game, and on double cards every time I believe they'll win. Take your choice, sell or take the consequences." This argument being irresistible, after some haggling Skaggs paid eighteen hundred dollars for the secret, after which he secluded himself until able to execute the trick to his entire satisfaction, when he struck his tent and started on a trip through the country, to work his new fraud on moneyed gamblers, and in less than two years time he realized from it about fifty thousand dollars.

In this manner he grasped the different arts invented at gaming, and skilled himself in the putting of them into practice. Of the numerous horde of sharpeners who have battered upon suckers, I mean the keepers of skinning-houses and the other capitalists, among them Skaggs was the only one who could skillfully execute the different maneuvers with his own hands. And also, unlike these, he would risk his money on the square; but always with the expectation that he would have a shade the best of it. In one word, in him was combined the qualities of a gambler, sharper, and business man.

He bought the friendship of every person who added anything in the way of new inventions to the frauds already known, by furnishing them with means, if necessary, to perfect their invention, or whenever the productions of their brains were in anywise useful to him, he put them in practice. From among the hangers-on around faro-rooms, he picked up young men of genteel appearance, who, if they showed any signs of ability, he educated into artists, keeping them at close study until he made them perfect manipulators in the science of stocking, and taking two cards at once. When satisfied with their attainments, he was wont to place them in pairs under the supervision of trustworthy agents, who were generally brothers, cousins, or some other con-

Skaggs scorned to be sharper; besides, the hundred-fold more valuable to detect the nature of the manipulator, and said "I've been for some time. Now I want to buy, because if you don't find it out, and I'll see every time I believe the consequences." Some haggling Skaggs met, after which he set back to his entire satisfaction on a trip through the eyes of gamblers, and in about fifty thousand parts invented at gamblers into practice. Of fattened upon suckers, and the other capitalists, could skillfully execute. And also, unlike the others; but always with the best of it. In the qualities of a gambler, on who added anything already known, by to perfect their inventions were in anywise. From among the hang-around young men of genteel habits of ability, he educated until he made them perfect, and taking two of their attainments, he was in the supervision of trustworthy artists, or some other con-

nections of the Skaggs family. These worthy mentors were well acquainted with the localities where faro-players might be found, and they generally took charge of the money, and attended to the business of the firm. It may be here premised that it was only to the most tried and trustworthy of his artists, that Mr. Skaggs ever entrusted any money.

From the year 1853 to 1856, he had scattered over the country, from the lakes to the gulf, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific, as many as twenty of these business associations, or firms, as I shall call them, for want of a better name. Wherever play could be secured, the agents were instructed to hazard the bank money, in all cases where any doubts existed, that any attempt at cheating might lead to detection. Consequently, their games possessed every appearance of fairness, even to the most suspicious gambler. For more than two years his schemes worked admirably; but at length the true character of his games leaked out, and a hue and cry was raised against them throughout the country, till the name of "Skaggs' patent dealers," as they were termed, was a synonym among gamblers for all sorts of frauds and dishonesty at the gaming-table.

Whenever Skaggs was notified by one of his firms that the bank was broken, or its fortunes at a very low ebb, he immediately telegraphed for the members to return, and sent out a fresh installment to fill their places. When the unlucky operators arrived, they were furnished with another stake, and started off to a new field of labor. He was liberal to his "broken" artists; in fact, they were seldom otherwise than broken; he furnished them with banks, money to pay their expenses, and gave to each 25 per cent. of the profits after paying expenses. From each bank to which he furnished money, he deducted in advance a yearly interest of ten per cent., and if his "artists" fell into his debt, he took their due-bills for the amount.

He must during his lifetime have educated and given a start to as many as fifty artists, a few of whom made money for him; but by far the greater part of them betrayed their trust. All these individuals possessed, in common with their class, a penchant for fine clothes, diamonds, and jewelry, and were by no means averse to champagne and fancy women. For the supply of these tastes money was required, and when they had squandered their own, the money belonging to the bank was brought into requisition.

Skaggs was at various periods concerned in first-class skinning-houses, both in New York and New Orleans, and also speculated in mules, sheep, real estate, and bank-stocks. As early as 1847 he owned a splendid sugar plantation, within fifty miles of the latter city, on which he worked about two hundred as likely looking negroes as could be seen in the State. He was in every sense a kind master, and when, in 1848, cholera visited that region, he staid upon his plantation and nursed those who were stricken down by it, as tenderly as if they had been his own children. He lost but seven of his slaves, while neighboring plantations were almost depopulated by that terrible scourge; the ignorant blacks being left to its mercy by their cowardly masters, who sought safety in flight on its first appearance among them.

About the year 1859 he dismissed all his patent dealers, and took no farther interest in gambling. The war breaking out shortly afterwards proved his ruin, the slaves being emancipated, and his plantation and real estate property greatly depreciated in value. At the commencement of the war he was worth a million of dollars, at its close he was almost a pauper. The loss of his plantation and negroes did not affect his energies. He ran the blockade, speculated in cotton and sugar in and around New Orleans with great success, and would no doubt have retrieved his shattered fortunes, had he not been so strong a believer in the ultimate success of the Confederacy. To the last moment he bought its bonds and money, of which he had in his possession about three millions when that institution caved in. This was the heaviest blow he had ever received, and he never rallied from it. He stood up to whiskey for relief, and fought manfully for over two years; but it finally planted him at last. He died in Texas in 1870, and I doubt if he was possessed of a dollar in the world, or its equivalent, unless it was a few acres of unsaleable land in that State. Peace to his manes!

The ruling passion of Skaggs was the love of money. When worth a million he would travel a hundred miles on a stormy night, on horseback, if by so doing he could rob any one of as many dollars at cards. He would at times take an even hazard at gambling with his money, which fact placed him far above his tribe, who never do so suicidal a thing. He showed no traits of generosity or liberality outside his own family or kindred; but nevertheless, in all business transactions, was the soul of probity.

## COL. J. J. BRYANT.

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This gentleman for many years enjoyed the honor of being well-known in the Southwest and California. His military title, of which he was vain, was, like those of many others in the Southern States, a greatness thrust upon him by his towns-people. He was a native of Lynchburg, Va., and there received an ordinary education. Before he was twenty years of age he made his bow to the public from the ring of a traveling circus, where he performed on the slack rope, and swallowed a sword for the delectation of the audience. Becoming tired of his roving life, he left the circus, took to himself a wife and settled down in Jackson, Miss., where he opened a grocery store. Subsequently he kept a hotel in the same place. In the course of a year or so he cast this business aside also, and began trading in negroes, and it was while pursuing this ennobling occupation that he was "dubbed" a "Colonel." It is impossible to enumerate, at this late day, the different sorts of business the "Colonel" was engaged in before he threw them all aside, in order to devote his talents exclusively to the green table; but he had always one or more partners, and, through some unexplained cause, a wrangle was the unvarying result of any attempt at settlement on the part of the firm. The consequence of which little misunderstanding was usually a lawsuit, of which the "Colonel" had always an unfailing assortment on his hands, from which he always emerged second best. But if his partners "bested" him at law, they gained no material advantage thereby, for the "Colonel" was sure to get away with all the available plunder, in spite of sheriffs or their auxiliaries.

Card-playing, if I am not mistaken, was one of the "Colonel's" accomplishments which he learned in early life, though he confined his efforts exclusively to poker, brag, and old sledge, which games he played remarkably well. While engaged in his different business operations he played cards whenever an opportunity occurred, and, having a great veneration for the profession and a still more exalted opinion of his talents in that line, he finally cast aside all pretensions to other business, and declared himself a gambler. He was naturally a heavy better, and no person could be found capable of winning more money than he, if fortune favored him. He understood the advantages of display, and spent his money freely with those who were rich, more especially

when he had designs on their pockets. He had more assurance than twenty men ought to be entitled to, and would obtain what credit and borrow what money he could, with the predetermination of never paying a cent of it. Still, no man in California or the Southwestern States had more wealthy and influential friends than Col. J. J. Bryant.

It was during the great Mississippi land sales, when Brandon money was almost as plentiful as mosquitoes in the swamps of Louisiana, that he commenced his gambling career. At that period he knew nothing of the arts of sharpers. But if he was unable to fleece the verdant fools who gave him their confidence, with a two-card box, he borrowed their money under various false pretenses, or induced them to take an interest in his games and then "throw them off." The following anecdote will serve to show the character of the man, and the lengths he would go to obtain money. Charles Cora, the same that was afterwards hanged by the Vigilance Committee of San Francisco in 1856, was, at the time of the Vicksburg land sales, and those of Jackson, Miss., in 1835-'36, but eighteen years old. He was an ignorant Italian boy, and had been picked up and raised by a woman who was the keeper of a house of prostitution in Natchez. A constant frequenter of the low gambling dens under the hill, he won from some of the faro-banks there about \$2,000. With this money he went to New Orleans and won some \$8,000 more. He then proceeded to Vicksburg, then the liveliest gambling place in the whole Southwest. Gambling banks existed, of various kinds, both on the hill and under the hill, in log-cabins, board houses, canvas tents, and in flat-boats. Vicksburg was a great place in those days, and Col. J. J. Bryant was the biggest gambler in the place, being interested in several faro-banks and various other banks, and was reputed to be worth hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Cora, on his arrival, started in rough-shod, and soon gobbled up seven or eight faro-banks, from which he gained about \$40,000. Bryant, being deeply interested in the raided banks, started in to get even. Cora was an uncouth boy, poorly versed in the ways of the world, or the deceptions of men. The attention paid him by so exalted a personage as Col. Bryant flattered his vanity and fairly turned his head. The latter lost no time in carrying into effect the scheme he had concocted for getting quits with him.

He stated to Cora that he had lately purchased several thousand acres of valuable land, which, in a few days, he intended to sell out, and expected to realize from it a million or so of dollars. But at the present moment he was in need of money to meet some small payments falling due, and asked him for a loan of \$10,000 for a few days. It was granted with pleasure. Why not? The Colonel's standing was high, and his friendship would be a fortune to him.

Bryant handed over the borrowed money to one of his cronies, and directed him to open an unlimited faro game with it. To this game he brought Cora and gave him a chance to win back his own money. I have said before that the Colonel was at this time ignorant of any means of cheating; but if he had possessed a good artist, Cora would certainly have proven a bully subject. But the best he could do was to borrow his money, and then rope him in to play, with the expectation that he would break himself against his own stake. But Cora was in a gale of good luck, and walked off with the \$10,000 he had loaned the Colonel. The latter, though repulsed, was not beaten. He had urgent need of \$10,000 more for a few days, to meet another payment, which Cora loaned as willingly as the first. The same disposal was made of the money as before. Cora was again brought before it, and told by the dealer he could win it, if so disposed, at a single bet. He was not quite so greedy as that, but certainly did win it in a few deals. The day following, the Colonel again struck Cora for \$15,000, which he also obtained. The money was put to the same use as the preceding \$20,000, and again did Bryant entice his victim to the bank; but what was his chagrin when Cora again walked off with the \$15,000 in his pocket.

It is hard to tell how much longer this little game might have lasted, had not one of those meddling and envious fellows, who, in every community, take such an interest in the affairs of their neighbors, got the ear of Cora, and maliciously poisoned his mind against the worthy Colonel. Cora demanded his money. The Colonel had nothing to give him but promises, and a desire to borrow \$15,000 more, just to make the debt an even \$60,000. Cora was inexorable, and insisted on having his money. The Colonel, in order to rid himself of his importunities, set upon him one of the most noted desperadoes of the place, who man aged to give him such a "healthy scare" that he took the steam-



er for New Orleans, immediately. It is quite unnecessary to add that he never received one cent of the \$35,000 which he loaned to Col. J. J. Bryant.

Previous to the California excitement, which called the Colonel to the Pacific coast, he confined his operations to the States of Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi. During the summer season he visited the most frequented watering places, and in the winter spent his time in New Orleans, Mobile, or Jackson, Mississippi. At this period, his inseparable companion was Allen Jones, a man whom I shall introduce to my readers in my next sketch. This delectable pair were acquainted with every business man, sporting man, professional man, or planter, in the whole region, who could play a game of cards. To such flats as they could skin in a rough manner at games of short cards, they showed but little mercy, but neither of them could have worked a two-card box upon the veriest fool. This difficulty was, however, easily overcome, as they knew the principal brace-dealers who made New Orleans or Mobile their stamping ground every winter, and to their dens they roped their fat gulls fresh from the country for skinning. During each session of the Legislature, held at Jackson, Mississippi, they ran a faro-bank in that place, which was patronized by the most wealthy and eminent men of the State, who met there for the purpose of law-making. These worthies attended to their game themselves. Not even an artist would they keep, for fear he might become acquainted with their patrons, and meeting them in New Orleans or Mobile, have them roped into houses there, and skinned. The Colonel and his estimable partner desired a monopoly of that business.

It does not appear that the Colonel and his partner had accumulated any large sum of money during the time of which I speak. Both were extravagant livers, both had large families, and were fond of playing at faro, which, together, served to keep them almost impoverished. These two worthies separated in 1849, and Colonel Bryant sailed for the Eldorado to seek his fortune.

The Colonel reached San Francisco early in the fall of 1854. Within a few weeks after his arrival, he won, playing at monte, about \$75,000. He immediately sent to his family about \$25,000, and spent as much more in endeavoring to procure his election as sheriff in San Francisco. The gamblers of the place were his

bitterest opponents; not that they disliked him personally, but because they considered him unfit for the office. He would, however, in all probability, have been elected, had it not been for the opportune arrival of Colonel Jack Hays from Texas, about four days previous to the election. The undeserved laurels which he had gained in the Mexican war were yet fresh when he made his appearance in San Francisco. In the enthusiasm of the moment, they pitted him against Bryant, whom he easily defeated.

About a month after this disastrous affair, he opened in the city the finest hotel which had ever been seen in the State. But the times were out of joint for such a costly undertaking, and the Colonel sunk what money he had with him in the country, at the venture.

Knowing how popular he was with his faro-bank players, the proprietor of the Eldorado gambling saloon in San Francisco put up for the Colonel the largest faro-bank in their house, in which they gave him an interest of one-third of the profits. This bank could win or lose daily, on an average, \$20,000, and was one of the most lucrative games in the country. The bank continued its success until something more than three months had passed, and during that time, on each tri-weekly steamer which left for Panama, Bryant shipped to his wife, in Virginia, his share of the winnings of the bank, and so continued to do until he had sent about \$30,000. Finally fortune deserted them, and in about six weeks the bank lost \$50,000. The Colonel then abandoned it, in spite of the demands and entreaties of the proprietors, who insisted he should conduct the game until it won him out of their debt.

After this event, I do not think the Colonel was ever connected with another banking game, but he played heavily against both faro and monte whenever he had money, which was not always. When broke, he relied on borrowing from business men whom he had known in the States, and seldom paid them back unless some extraordinary pressure was brought to bear on him. As he would scorn to strike his victim for less than a thousand dollars at a time, it will readily be seen how severely he must have punished his too-confiding creditors. Whenever he was successful in winning at bank as much as \$10,000, he at once shipped it off to his wife, to whom, if his own story be true,

he shipped altogether, while in California, \$110,000. This money he lavished freely on his large family of sons and daughters, educating and supporting them in the most extravagant style. Finally he played himself completely out in California, and in the year 1850 left that country.

In the winter of 1858 he opened a suite of magnificent rooms on Canal street, New Orleans. The fitting up and furnishing of these rooms cost about \$18,000. Yet the Colonel did not expend one penny on them, but got all this done on the strength of his tongue. In addition to this, he borrowed from a prominent jewelry establishment in the place, about \$30,000 worth of silver-plate, to set off his side-board and table.

This was the first skinning-house which the Colonel ever conducted. The two partners who run the place with him were as poor as himself, but both could exercise a two-card box to perfection, and the Colonel had a healthy opinion of himself as a roper; nor was he deceived. The house, though not in the immediate vicinity of the hotels, made during its first winter about \$44,000, of which the Colonel received one-half, while the other half was divided between the two other partners. Meanwhile the Colonel had exercised his talents outside against different faro-banks, and was so fortunate as to beat them out of about \$20,000.

One would naturally suppose that the Colonel, being so successful, would pay those whom he had induced to fit up his house on credit. But no! not one cent would he pay; it was entirely against his principles. The most any of his creditors got was the upholsterer, who got his furniture back after it had been used all winter. Even his wine merchant he cheated, or did not pay his bill of two thousand dollars. He never attempted to avoid his creditors; he would scorn so mean an action as that; besides, he was not afraid of any one. He was a fighter if fighting was requisite; but always put off his creditors with, "I can't pay you now, but I'll pay you shortly." But that shortly never came to a head with the Colonel.

The following winter he fitted up, at a cost of forty thousand dollars, a suite of rooms opposite the St. Charles Hotel. In this magnificent establishment, the finest of its kind ever seen in New Orleans, he had three partners. His success of the previous winter had filled him with the most extravagant ideas. He im-

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agined that he was going to make in his new house one million dollars during the winter, and in order to outdo all the other skinning establishments in the city, he wanted to have an enclosed passage from the second story of the St. Charles Hotel, leading across the street into his skinning-den. His club house cards, emblazoned with his name, he distributed about the reading and bar-rooms, and even in the ladies' parlor. But the proprietors would not consent to the passage-way; nevertheless, his house was nightly filled, and during the winter robbed from its foolish patrons nearly one hundred and fifty thousand dollars. The year following, murmurs of war began to disturb the equanimity of the South. Money became less plentiful among the gulls, even plantations worked by negro slaves could not bring it forth from its hiding-place. It began to look rather squally for the skinning-dens. The Colonel thought so, and disposed of his share in the house to his partners.

During the war he fitted up in Mobile a splendid establishment, which he ran successfully for about two years, when it was closed by the military authorities. In this house he made more than a million of dollars, which was, however, in Confederate money. Being a strong believer in the ultimate success of the Confederacy, he held on to it until it became worthless. With the close of the war he returned to New Orleans without a dollar. He had lost one of his sons in the Confederate service, and his wife was at that time living with one of his married daughters in California. But in New Orleans he found his old friend, Allen Jones, keeping a fashionable skinning-shop, and he extended to the Colonel a helping hand for the sake of "auld lang syne," and gave him a half interest in his business. Here he remained until the year 1868, at which time he was killed in the rotunda of the St. Charles Hotel, by one Col. Tate, of Texas. He had roped Tate to his den and caused him to be skinned of what money he had about him. He now asked for checks on credit, which were furnished him; he left the house in its debt about one hundred dollars. As he did not return to liquidate his indebtedness, Bryant, after the lapse of a few days, went in search of him. He found him seated in the rotunda of the St. Charles. An altercation ensued between them, in the course of which Bryant made a motion as if he were about to draw a weapon. Tate, believing his life to be in danger, drew a pistol and shot his opponent

dead on the spot. He was tried on the charge of murder, and acquitted.

If Bryant ever paid one of his creditors a debt of a thousand dollars, he did so with the expectation of making ten thousand dollars by the operation. To use an expressive Americanism, he was "a dead beat." He beat everybody he could who was worth beating, and was no respecter of persons outside his own family and profession. He was uneducated and uncultivated, possessed of neither wit nor conversational powers of any sort, but his consummate impudence and tact overcame all difficulties. His extraordinary success in obtaining so many dupes on whom to prey was due to his profuse liberality, his extravagant habits, and the generous manner in which he entertained those with whom he came in contact. Aside from these, his many heavy losses and winnings had established for him a sort of frothy reputation, on the strength of which he obtained credit with the unwary, who believed him honest, and at any moment likely to handle large sums of money. Hundreds of such confiding idiots found too late what was his real character, and cursed the hour in which they first made the acquaintance of Col. J. J. Bryant.

"Descend to hell with the curses of orphans and widows!" shrieked a half-maniac woman, as she gazed on the bloody and pallid face of Robespierre, as he lay in the tumbril which was dragging him to the guillotine. The curse was re-echoed through Christendom; yet the landlord of Robespierre loved him, and his brother gave his life for him.

With all his grand faults, Bryant had also his redeeming qualities. He was generous and liberal to a fault, and the indigent never called upon him in vain. He would sell the coat from his back to assist a stranger in need. He was the foe of all cruelty, and had plenty of nerve to oppose it, and did so successfully whenever he had an even chance. He paid liberally those who labored for him, and never was known to cheat a *small* tradesman out of his bill. With his partners he was honest. His negro servant, Sully, lived with him over thirty years. The Colonel purchased him with his wife and children, the latter of whom he caused to be educated at one of the schools in Ohio, and so great was the attachment of Sully and his wife, that, during the reign of slavery, they followed the Colonel and his family to California and back again to the slave States. However straitened

might be his circumstances—and he was frequently without money for weeks at a time—he could not be induced to sell one of his slaves, nor did he fail to take the best of care of his own family. However hard pressed he might be for money, his wife and children were well provided for. His sons and daughters were educated in the best colleges and schools; one of the former fell, fighting for the Confederacy, while the other is now a practicing physician in Illinois. His three daughters all married respectable men, one of whom is an able lawyer of California.

The two characters which I have endeavored to sketch for the reader are dissimilar in habits, manners and disposition, yet each were no less pirates on society. One was generous and extravagant, while the other was mean and stingy. One was a fraud in nearly all his business transactions, while the other was the soul of probity. Both of them would, however, hazard their money at the gambling-table on the square, which places them as far above the common run of sharpers as the brilliancy of the diamond surpasses a piece of common charcoal. I shall now introduce two other worthies, who are a fair specimen of those men who are running aristocratic skinning-games in our large cities and at our fashionable watering-places.

## ALLEN JONES.

This name has already figured in the foregoing sketch, as the partner of Col. J. J. Bryant, and I would have spared my readers any further acquaintance with him, had not his unprecedented meanness and his wonderful success in the skinning business rendered him conspicuous among his class.

Allen Jones was a native of Tennessee, and a saddler by trade. In the year 1839, at which period he was about thirty years old, he possessed a well-stocked saddlery business in the thriving town of Huntsville, Ala. Col. Bryant on one of his predatory excursions made his acquaintance, and stripped him of saddles, bridles, money, and all the rest and residue of his possessions at the fascinating game of poker. Being the first person who had ever trounced him at that game, he conceived a very high opinion of the Colonel's abilities, and petitioned to become his travelling companion. The Colonel magnanimously consented, and for the greater part of the next decade they were known as

the Orestes and Pylades of the gambling fraternity—swindling in company, living upon an undivided purse, and fighting each other's battles. When so great a sensation was caused throughout the land by the discovery of gold in California, the erratic nature of Bryant predisposed him to catch the infection, which he did in its most virulent form. But the practical Jones saw more gold in the cotton pods of the Southern States than in traversing stormy seas to join in the breathless scramble of the millions who were flocking to the Golden Gate. The partnership was accordingly dissolved, having lasted ten years. The inseparables parted, whether in tears I am unable to say, but as neither were much given to the "melting mood" I presume pocket handkerchiefs were not introduced at the final moment. Jones' career had been a rather checkered one since he abandoned the honest trade of a saddler to follow the precarious chances of gambling. Frequent combats with the "tiger," in which he pretty generally came out second best, had kept him impoverished. He beat up suckers, and cheated them out of their money at short cards, or roped them to "brace dealers," there to be skinned, and squandered the fruits of his endeavors at faro. Nor did he show any signs of reform until in the winter of 1852, when he was offered a third interest in one of the secretly conducted skin-games of New Orleans, if he would rope for the concern. This offer he accepted. The nomadic life which he had led for the last ten or twelve years having made him acquainted with many persons of wealth and respectability who were fond of cards or "bucking the tiger," he made a capital roper. This was the first house of the sort in which Jones had ever been directly interested, and during the winter his share of the profits amounted to about \$10,000. He now discovered his true vocation, and the ready wealth which might be amassed in keeping a "bird-house" on the same principle as that of Pendleton's, in Washington. But it was dangerous to invest a large sum of money in such a house, as it might be at any moment raided by the police, and the fine for gambling was \$1000 for the first offense, and \$5000 for the second, and on the third conviction the doom was two years in the State prison. He had already passed the ordeal of the first two, for dealing snaps of faro in New Orleans, and if convicted of the third offense stood in danger of being punished for felony. However, he

flung his fears to the winds, and opened, with two other sharpers, a handsomely fitted up establishment on Royal street, which proved a great success.

This house, opened in the fall of 1853, made, during the ensuing winter and spring, besides its expenses, something like \$55,000. The following winter the house was again opened, and met with better success than before; but an informer smuggled himself into the establishment and caused Jones to be indicted for dealing faro. The first information he had of the affair, was the finding of a true bill against him by the grand jury, and being hauled up and obliged to give bail for his appearance in court to answer the charge of gambling. Jones stood his trial, was convicted, and sentenced to two years in the penitentiary, but the Governor's pardon was presented to him before leaving the court-house. He said he had it in his pocket during his trial. Be that as it may, he had made powerful friends, and at the next session of the Legislature, through the influence of his friends and money caused the law against gambling to be stripped of the obnoxious clause which gave half the fine to the informer, thus virtually destroying the law. The following year the Know-nothing party got possession of the city, and, as Jones soon proved himself one of its ablest supporters, he was relieved from all fears of further persecution. He now showed the most sordid and grasping disposition; he owned his establishment, and however many sharpers were there employed to assist, he invariably claimed half the plunder. Not being satisfied with this, he concocted the following scheme for robbing his partners. Whenever his wealthy patrons desired to gamble in his house on credit, he permitted them to do so, and debts of this kind from thirty to fifty thousand would be owing to the house of a season. These debts, or a large majority of them, he would secretly collect and retain the money. Every winter, from 1854 to 1860, he kept a skinning-house, and each succeeding winter had in it a new stable of sharpers, and of all who served him, not one ever received one cent that was due the house when they left it. His partners traced up, at different times, large sums of money which he had collected, a share of which was rightfully theirs, but neither threats nor entreaties could induce him to disgorge a single penny. The only partner whom he was never known to swindle, was Colonel J. J. Bryant; he was afraid to cut any of



his capers on that reputable chieftain. If one spark of generosity ever glowed within the breast of Allen Jones, it was stifled the moment he began to accumulate a little money and be placed above actual want. Honesty was entirely foreign to his nature, and his rascally greedy and domineering disposition aroused against him the enmity of his own class to such a degree that, in such a place as New Orleans during the reign of Thugery, it is a wonder he was not assassinated. The year previous to the breaking out of the war, he owned a fine plantation on the Mississippi River twenty-five miles above Vicksburg, on which he worked two hundred and twenty-five slaves, who made, in the year 1859, nine hundred bales of cotton. Besides this, he owned two fine houses and lots in New Orleans, for one of which he was offered \$60,000. Altogether, he must have been worth about \$400,000, all of which sprang from the magic recesses of a two-card faro box.

In the height of his prosperity the civil war swooped down upon him, and tore from his grasp the large fortune he had accumulated by the most sordid frauds. His slaves were gone, but he still retained his plantation and city property, though much reduced in value. Immediately after the city of New Orleans again fell under civil government, Jones reopened his skinning-den, taking as partner, as I have before stated, Colonel Bryant. But money was scarce, and the wealthy planters and merchants, who were wont to surrender their money so confidently to the two-card boxes, were either dead or impoverished, and skinning-houses were getting, besides, pretty well played out there, since several square banks had obtained an ascendancy. After the death of his partner, Jones continued to keep his house open, but with indifferent success. He now commenced playing against the different faro-banks in the city, a thing he had not done since the beginning of his successful career, driven thereto, no doubt, by ennui. In the course of a year, he lost what money he had and what money he could raise by mortgaging his city property, in all about \$70,000. His plantation he had made over to his wife and children at the breaking out of the rebellion, fearing that retaining it in his own name would cause it to be confiscated. This his wife held on to, or he would most certainly have played it off against faro. At the present time he has no more money to buy chips, and consequently cannot

pursue his favorite amusement. He has not the general "dernier resort" of his stripe, to open another skinning-house, for he is so completely played out that nobody would patronize his game, and he bears among those to whom he is well known, the unenviable reputation of being the meanest and most sordid wretch that ever disgraced the fraternity of sharpers.

## HENRY PRICE McGRATH.

The reader will doubtless remember that this is the gentleman who came to New York with Johnny Chamberlain, and of whom I have already spoken under the head of "sharpers." My object in once more bringing this "roystering cove" to the front, is to demonstrate to you that good behavior and manners, suave address and language, are by no means indispensable to the successful roper.

In no other person with whom I am acquainted are the vices of fraud, avariciousness, insolence, jealousy, and cowardice, more strongly developed than in the subject of this sketch. His entertaining qualities consist in being a good eater and drinker, singing snatches of blackguard songs, telling stories decidedly bordering on the indecent, and chattering learnedly on the merits of various race-horses—a subject about which he knows as much as he does of the method of squaring the circle, or the secret of perpetual motion. It is a strange phenomenon that such an ignorant, uncouth, and unmannerly loon, should have succeeded through so many years in drawing to his skinning-house such numbers of men of the highest cultivation and intelligence, and making them his victims. Such has, however, been the case, and he is one of the most successful sharpers that ever operated in this country.

Henry P. McGrath was born and raised in Versailles, Kentucky. His parents were comparatively poor, but managed to give their three sons each a commonplace education, and teach them each the tailoring trade. The subject of this sketch was religiously inclined, and when between twenty-one and twenty-two years old became a member of the church. He soon fell from grace, however, and gave himself up to a life of dissipation and idleness. He renounced psalm singing and the tailoring business simultaneously, shook the dust of Versailles from his feet,

and started for Lexington, where he was "hale fellow well met," with the worst desperadoes in the place. He here took his first lesson in the tortuous ways of the sharper's career by capping the games of "thimble-riggers" and "dice-coggers" around races and fairs. Having some ability, he shortly learned how to swindle at short cards; after following this for a year or two, he became initiated in the mysteries of a two-card box, for which he was employed as roper by some sharpers visiting Lexington. He now began to make some headway in life. Having on his side many of those young desperadoes with which Lexington was then disgraced, and with whom he consorted, he made his name a terror to all timid faro-bankers who visited Paris, Frankfort, Lexington, and the different watering places of the blue-grass country. By in various ways intimidating these, he forced from them a small interest in their games without risking any money of his own. If they refused to comply with his demands he prevented them in various ways from opening their games. Such gamblers as he could not work on in this manner he publicly impeached the fairness of their games, and as he made it a point to force his acquaintance upon all verdant faro-players of respectable standing, with whom he had made himself popular, he possessed sufficient influence to keep them from patronizing any game which had fallen under his displeasure; because they considered him "*au fait*" in all gambling matters. After commending himself to the favor of faro-players, he either borrowed their money to play against a bank, or roped them to the first itinerant "brace" sharper that came along, to be fleeced. In this manner did Mr. McGrath pave the way for his future greatness. Gamblers coming into the blue-grass country during the summer months, or the neighboring watering places, gave him a share in their games and allowed him to assist at them, on account of his popularity. If these games lost, as was frequently the case, he never paid back his portion of the losses, it being one of the maxims of Mr. McGrath's life, never to pay anything he could squirm out of.

With all the popularity he won for himself, and the ready money he had often in hand, he met with no remarkable success until the year 1855. In that year a splendid skinning establishment was fitted up on Carondelet street, New Orleans, by three prominent sharpers. Knowing how popular was Mr. McGrath

with the "bloods" in the blue-grass region, many of whom visited New Orleans in the winter, for either business or pleasure, they engaged him to rope for the house, giving him an equal share in the profits with themselves. Their foresight redounded to the filling of their pockets; for Mr. McGrath proved to be the best ropcr in New Orleans, more especially among Kentuckians. The first year the house made about \$50,000, and every subsequent one up to 1860 it made from \$60,000 to \$80,000.

In the meantime McGrath became mighty upon the turf. He bought a stable of race horses (though he seldom won a race with any of them), and what with the expenses of keeping them, his losses on the turf, combined with his extravagant style of living, he could barely make both ends meet, notwithstanding the immense revenue derived from his skinning-house. At the commencement of the war he had nothing but his share in the house, the property having been bought by the company. I have already related his going to New Orleans to prospect for opening his house there, during the war, and how he was, in consequence, captured by the military authorities, thrown into prison, and kept there over a year. Also how, upon his release, he accompanied Chamberlain to New York, and there opened with a company of sharpers the most magnificent establishment ever seen in that city. From this, I believe, McGrath received as his share about \$200,000, when the partnership was dissolved, and himself and Chamberlain withdrew from the concern. He invested his money in a splendid farm a short distance from Lexington, from whence he comes every summer to Long Branch to assist Johnny Chamberlain in conducting his magnificent "*Maison de Jeu*," in that place, of which the reader has had already a full description.

He still keeps up his stable of racers, and at every important race meeting in the country some of them may be seen. The following was copied from a public print dated May 5, 1872, and will give the reader an idea of the princely manner in which the chief of sharpers entertains his friends on his splendid estate in the blue-grass country:

"McGrath, of beautiful and princely McGrathiana, Sunday last gave a dinner to his many friends gathered at Lexington with the object of attending the races. Report says the day was lovely and the dinner was a grand suc-

cess. Among the gentlemen who gathered round the tables spread on the blue-grass lawn, under the stately locust trees, were Mr. R. Ten Broeck, of Louisville; ex-Governor Robinson; A. Keene Richards, Esq.; General A. Buford; General John C. Breckinridge; Major Thomas; General Basil Duke; General James F. Robinson, Jr.; General Wm. Preston; Colonel Robert Wooley; Dr. W. G. Chipley; Hon. K. C. Barker, of Detroit; Captain O. P. Beard; Victor Newcomb; Garnett Marshall, of Louisville; Lieutenant Ward; Mr. Grensted; and others. Hospitality at McGrathiana is as princely as the estate is lordly; and it is not necessary to add that the distinguished gentlemen thoroughly enjoyed themselves. Not to know McGrath and McGrathiana is not to know all the splendors of the blue-grass country."

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## CHAPTER XXII.

### NEW YORK.

Time, that restless agent of Nature, had dispelled the frosty breath of winter, and brought on its wings the balmy airs of May. The trees were clothed in their vernal mantle, the shrubs with variegated blossoms, and the fields and lawns green with rich pasturage; while myriads of birds of various notes and plumage filled the air with their cheerful songs. It had been a long session of Congress; but already was Washington deserted by the most of its strangers, lobbyists, and office-seekers, and the remainder were fast leaving the place, with its sultry climate and swarms of mosquitoes, to its proud, pompous, and arrogant denizens.

The Major and myself, having sold the furniture and given up our rooms, were making our final preparations to leave for New York. Our business during our winter in Washington had been but an unprofitable one, and to endeavor to make up for lost time and money, we had concluded to try our fortunes in the city of New York, by the advice and under the patronage of one Mr. Phil. McGovern. This gentleman had, during the past winter, made several visits to Washington, from the city of New York, where he resided. He kept a coffee-house in Chatham street,

and also belonged to the noble army of New York ward politicians. While in Washington, Mr. McGovern had honored us by making our faro-rooms his loafing place. He gambled but slightly, but drank deep. He was, as his name indicated, a native of the "gim of the say," and a big one too, as witness a frame six feet two, and proportionably stout. He wore on the front of his head a large jovial red face, guiltless of beard, whiskers or mustache, while his poll was adorned with a shaggy crop of flaming red hair. He might have passed for a man of forty, but had seen more years; he dressed *à la mode*, and at first sight looked a dignified personage enough. Regarding the disposition and manners of this worthy, the reader will have ample scope for judging as we progress in our narrative. The Major was bewitched by the oily tongue of our new friend, and, after a short acquaintance, had come to the conclusion that he was one of the most noble and generous-hearted Irishmen with whom he had ever come in contact—something new for the Major, who, as a general thing, was by no means fond of the Celtic tribe. On the other hand, Mr. McGovern swore that the Major was a "thru Varginny gintleman o' the rale ould shtock, and a credit to the Shtate that raised 'im, by the powers." My suspicious nature was in nowise aroused by the sudden intimacy which sprung up between the pair. Mr. McGovern did not seem much in the gambling mood, and I could not discern in what other way he could carry out designs upon the Major's pocket, supposing him to have them. They both loved their talk and their toddies, and the society of each seemed nearly indispensable to the other.

Mr. McGovern informed the Major that his frequent visits to Washington during the winter were caused by his great anxiety to advance the welfare of his political friends, who he was desirous should receive a share of the federal patronage of New York city. "Damn a man won't shtand by his friends, Major; that's me motto, me boy."

How far Mr. McGovern succeeded on behalf of his friends, or whether he ever had such a benevolent project in view, I never troubled myself to ascertain. The subject gave me no uneasiness; but what interested me much more, was the pains that worthy gentleman was always taking to convince the Major he was on the wrong road to fortune.

"It's a shame and a disgrace, so it is, that such a fine gintleman

as yourself should be spindlin' his days in such a dirty place as Washington, when it's in New York ye'll get as many faro-players as ye want, and be the same token, live like a lord. Lave this dirty place, Major, and come with me beyant there to New York. The divel a good ye'll do here at all! Come to New York wid me; faith, ye'll niver regret it while ye've Phil. McGovern at yer back. Take me word fur't, ye'll do well there." To these continual and pressing invitations the Major yielded, and started for the city, taking with him your humble servant.

Within a week after our arrival in the great metropolis, Mr. McGovern secured for us a commodious room on the Bowery, which he caused to be plastered, cleaned, and papered, supplied with a faro-table, a poker-table, a couple of dozen of chairs, a side-board, a writing desk, lamps, and other requisite small articles, all of which were of the most ordinary description. When it was ready for us to enter, Mr. McGovern, who had attended to the fitting up of the place, presented us with a bill of \$514, which the Major paid to him on the spot. Having received the money, he conveyed it to his pocket, and proceeded to address us in the following strain:

"Now, gentlemen, we'll all three be aqualy interested in the good or bad of this room; but mind ye's, I wouldn't for the woruld have it known I was yer pardners. Begorra, if that was to lake out, sure it 'ud be the ruin o' me intirely, so we'll kape that to ourselves, whatever comes amiss."

"On that score you need be under no uneasiness," answered the Major, in a dignified tone.

"Troth, I belave ye's! or I'd have nothing to do wid ye's! so that matther's done for, now for the nixt. To-night I'll bring me friends and introduce 'em to ye's, so ye's can see what they are. Begorra, ye'll find 'em gentlemen anyhow, an' with fists full of money, divil a lie in it! An' they'll bet at ye's hot and heavy, take my word for it, Major, an' bate ye's too if ye'll let 'em, begorra! Howld a bit! Howld a bit! Sure we mustn't do the thing shabbily at all, at all. I'll sind up two or three baskets o' champagne to thrate the b'ys! Sure it'll look dacent on the openin' night."

"I was on the point of suggesting something of the kind myself," said the Major.

McGovern addressed his conversation exclusively to the Major,

and never by word or look acknowledged my presence. It is true he used the plural "ye's," and opened business by saying, "We'll all be aqually interested," etc.; but otherwise had paid me no more attention than if I were one of the chairs or tables.

The Major listened with profound attention to his remarks and acknowledged the wisdom of his suggestions and instructions, by sundry nods and remarks of "Very good, sir," and concluded by saying, "We shall endeavor to obey your instructions, sir, as you are undoubtedly the best judge of the manner in which your town's-people should be treated."

"Lave me alone for that, Major, me b'y. Sure I know ivery mother's son o' them, an' can do as I plaze wid 'em."

"How much bank money shall we require, Mr. McGovern?" I inquired, for the first time putting in my oar into the conversation.

"That 'll be a schmall affair. Three or four thousand or the likes o' that 'll be lashins," he replied.

"Very good! And as we are going to open the bank to-night, let us make up our banking money now," I answered.

"Go on wid the money ye have wid ye's, an' whin ye's nade more, ye'll find the check o' Phil McGovern as good at the Bank of America for \$5,000 as ould Asthor's!"

"That's all right, Mr. McGovern," said the Major, darting a savage look at me; then bowing to McGovern, he said, "Sufficient, sir, among gentlemen."

"Faith, none knows the likes o' them better nor yoursel, Major, an' that the dirthy subject o' money shouldn't be mentioned betwixt and betwene 'em, till the article's naded, anyhow. So now I'll lave ye's an' order the wine, an' in the avenin' I'll bring up me frinds to drink it," and bowing to the Major, he left the room with a lofty stride.

When he had left I paced up and down the room for some time, meditating on the sublime heights to which human impudence may rise. At last I suddenly stopped in my exercise before the Major, and addressed him with, "Major, this seems to me to be a very loose way of transacting business, sir. We don't know what kind of a game we may have to deal, nor how much money it will require to bank it, or if it should lose, whether Mr. McGovern will pay his share of the losses."

"Jack, you're always finding bears and lions in the way.



You're too suspicious to deal with gentlemen, sir. Mr. McGovern is a gentleman, sir, and of the highest standing in this city, and were he inclined to commit a dishonorable action, sir, towards us here, he could not afford to do so. We need his assistance to procure customers, and also to protect our game, and 'twould be impossible for us to get on without him. But to relieve your anxiety, I'll hold myself responsible for his share of the bank money, sir; will that be satisfactory?" demanded the Major, with some asperity.

"Certainly, Major, but—"

"Very good, sir! Now, sir, as we are in a strange place and among strange people, let's try and get along as smoothly as possible, sir," he said, peevishly.

"You can't go very far amiss in keeping a strict watch upon strangers with whom you are concerned in money transactions, and when I ventured to express a doubt of Mr. McGovern, 'twas as much for your protection as for mine."

"I have arrived at that age, sir, which needs no protection from others," stiffly replied the Major.

"I must beg leave to differ with you there, Major, for you are ready to place confidence in every scheming villain who talks in a highfalutin strain about the things that are proper between gentlemen, and flatters your vanity to get an opportunity to pick your pocket. I should have thought the Simpson affair would have made you more cautious; but you seem to be just as ready to be cajoled as ever. What do you know about McGovern's honesty? Why should you be so ready to take his word on so short an acquaintance? This is a matter of business, not courtesy, and the way for him to show his honesty of purpose is to come up with his money, and not blarney about it."

"Keep cool, Jack! Don't fly off at the handle, my boy; I'll be responsible for McGovern, and you shan't be in any way a loser by him."

"Yes, Major, but I don't want you to be a loser by him, either, and it's my opinion he's beat us both, already. Look around this room—what is there to show for five hundred and odd dollars here? Why, I don't believe he's spent three hundred dollars altogether, sir! I tell you, Major, this man has chiseled us already, and he means to do it again; and he will, too, if we don't take him to task pretty sharply. His big talk about his

five thousand dollar check is all 'popyecock.' Why don't he show up his money? This is no way to do business."

"Well, well!" exclaimed the Major testily; "let's see first what our prospects are, before we commence quarreling with McGovern. I'd stake my life he's an honest man, and means well by us. Should he prove otherwise, I'll take the loss on my shoulders."

"Then you intend to let him go ahead his own way?"

"Most certainly, sir! Do you want me to dictate to him what he shall do, in his own home, and among his own people?"

Finding that the Major was already somewhat angry with me for my perseverance, and seeing the futility of further discussion, I dropped the subject.

Mr. McGovern, true to his promise, made his appearance in our rooms, in the evening, in company with twenty or more individuals, whom he characterized as the b'h'ys; and a motley crowd they were. Nearly all were respectably dressed, and some stylishly. Many carried in their hands gold-headed canes, while gold and gems adorned the fronts of their shirts and glittered on their stumpy fingers; and every face, though some were by no means ill-looking, bore the stamp of dissipation and debauchery. Their fine raiment, and the gems and jewels which they wore, could not conceal a certain air of coarseness and roystering rowdyism which hung about them.

Mr. McGovern presented his "fr'iends," one after another, to the Major, and each having shaken him by the hand, in the most energetic pump-handle fashion, he, prefacing his remarks with a stentorian "whist," and thereby bespeaking silence, proceeded to deliver himself of the following speech:

"Gintlemen! Major George Jenks is one of the rale ould Varginny stock; a thrue gintleman, ivery inch ov 'im. You can take me wurrud for it. He's a sthranger among ye's, 'an ye'll thrate 'im kindly, for its deservin he is of it, if he is a gambler! He's come to dale faro to ye's, an' be the same token, he's brought lashins o' money wid him, an' he'll hand it over to ye's like a man if yer able to win it."

This address received several interruptions during its delivery, several of the audience calling out, "Spin yer string short, Govey!" "O gas!" "Dry up and bust!" "Shy yer castor and let's drink," with many more elegant phrases in common use

among this refined crowd. When the speech was concluded, a gentleman at the rear of the crowd, who had not opened his mouth since entering the room, remarked solemnly:

"S'pose the by's kin tell a blood whin they sees 'em widout all that palaver. Faith, ye's know a gintleman as will as the best o' them, but the divil a harrum in knowin' what fashion o' gentleman yer interduced to."

"Blarney!" "Too much chaff!" "Cheese it!" "Stash it, Govey, ole boy, an' let's try the Major's champagne," roared half a dozen at once.

"Yaas, Govey, stash it, ole hoss, yer too long-winded," drawled a gentleman of the "Mose" order, who was standing immediately opposite Mr. McGovern, and who, to give point to his remark, favored that gentleman with such a punch in the ribs as brought the water to his eyes and sent him reeling to the opposite side of the room. This scientific feat was received with laughter from all sides, and Mr. McGovern, seeing no more opportunity for speechifying, hid his chagrin in the popping of the champagne corks. General hilarity prevailed. Two dozen of wine were uncorked, and the Major's health, extension of longevity, and success, drank in bumpers with vociferous cheering, to which that gentleman responded in a short, but good-natured speech.

Mr. McGovern had meanwhile planted himself in front of the faro-table, and demanded \$200 worth of checks, which I supplied to him, but for which he offered me no money. Several other persons now came up to the table, bought chips, and I soon had a lively play. As no arrangement had been made relative to the limit of the game, I took it upon myself to fix it at \$25 and \$100, when one of our players desired to make a bet on a card, of \$200. Some twelve men were about the table, and several had shown large rolls of bank bills, and were betting heavily against the game. The chances were favorable for us to win or lose a considerable sum of money, and the conduct of the players was admirable. Not so, however, with the other portion of the company. After hoisting in a large quantity of champagne, and brandy to top off with, they had gathered about the poker table. For a short time they behaved with propriety, but the liquor they had drank having had time to loosen their tongues, they became pretty noisy. They discussed in loud

tones the merits of different ward politicians, fire engine companies, prize fighters, and many kindred subjects, talking all at once, and using more profane language and slang than is generally to be heard in assemblies of gentlemen. Occasionally, when the uproar waxed deafening, McGovern would turn around in his chair, and cry out, "Whist, ye devils, ye're not at a primary meeting." After such a remonstrance, comparative quiet would reign for a few moments, when the babel of tongues would recommence. Finally, amid their rude wit and chaffing, two of the party had got into angry dispute relative to their respective fire-engine companies, which resulted in one of the parties calling the other a liar, and a square knock-down was the consequence. The game had dealt up to this time with more than usual good luck, and was nearly \$3000 winner, besides \$400 which McGovern owed the bank. As there seemed plenty of money around the bank, the chances were for us to make a good winning, but our prospects were not realized. The moment that little pleasantry took place between the two worthies at the poker table, the whole party jumped to their feet, and a deafening shout arose of "A ring! a ring! fair play! fair play!" My players also hastened to the vicinity of the combatants; some had their checks cashed, while others crammed theirs hastily into their pockets. With scant ceremony, the faro-table and all other furniture was pushed back or piled one upon the other, to give the combatants a clear field, after which they were placed in a position facing each other, stripped to the buff, and duly seconded according to the established rules of the P. R. Mr. Phil. McGovern was chosen referee, an office which he accepted with joyful alacrity, to the immense astonishment and disgust of the Major.

"Fifty dollars on Jakey Grier," sung out a bystander. The bet was immediately taken, several others were offered and taken the moment they passed the lips of those making them. "Jakey Grier" had the "call" over his opponent, Jimmy Riley. Whether it was owing to the fact that he had knocked down Jimmy, or his previous exploits in the manly art, that had given his backers such confidence in his mettle, I am unable, unfortunately, to inform my reader, but certain it is, that as the "mill" was about to commence, the odds were \$50 to \$40 on Jakey, and no takers. I suppose, altogether, about \$600 was wagered upon

the issue of the fight. The combatants pummeled each other for something like fifteen minutes, when the "mill" was brought to a close by Jimmy Riley delivering an upper cut with his left, which landed underneath the ear of Jakey, knocking that gentleman completely out of time. The combat being thus closed, the spectators liquored up all round, and a double portion being imbibed by the combatants. Jakey, entirely "*hors du combat*," was assisted to his domicile, while the victorious Jimmy, with two teeth knocked out and one eye in mourning, not to mention the general appearance of his "mug," was congratulated by his numerous friends.

Mr. McGovern and some of his party now returned the different articles of furniture to their places, and a general demand was made that the faro-bank should be reopened. But the Major positively declined to comply with the request, alleging as his reason, that he was afraid the police would force an entrance into the house. "Force hell!" roared a brawny son of the Emerald Isle, holding up a fist which looked as if it might have felled an ox. "It's myself 'ud like to see one o' the dirty sons o' bitches poke his mug in at that dure till I'd mash it for 'im."

But neither threats nor entreaties—and both were unsparingly used—would induce the Major to reopen his game.

"This is a d--n nice hole you've roped us inter, Gov.," said one of that gentleman's friends; "these ere fellers are 'fraid o' their shadder."

"The perlice, is it?" said another, "Be Ja—s, it's the likes o' them I'll kape clear o' the likes o' us; it's themselves knows we'd put a head on ivery mother's son ov 'em if they interfare wid the divarshins o' gentlemen."

"Ye's must excuse me friends; sure, they're not used to the b'ys yet," said McGovern, apologetically.

"That ain't it! They've took in a few hundred dollars, and that 'll last 'em till they die," cried another worthy.

"Let 'em go to h—l if they don't open their game," said a gentleman in the crowd; "there's plenty o' games in town besides this. Come down to Jimmy Daley's, he'll give ye farrer till yer belly aches."

This elegant sentiment being received with great approbation, the originator started for the door, and probably ultimately for the domicile of the accommodating Mr. Daley. He was accom-

panied by two or three comrades, while the remainder soon followed suit, and stood not upon the order of their going by any means.

"Well, Major! How do you like our game?" I inquired, soon after our guests had departed.

"The money I saw I liked well enough, sir; but a more disgraceful set of ruffians than our players to-night, I have never had the luck to meet."

"Mr. McGovern owes the bank \$400; did his play count, or not?"

"Unquestionably it did, sir! Always does in such cases, unless an express understanding is had previously."

"Should he refuse to acknowledge his play as a genuine one, are you willing to pay me one-third of what he owes the bank?" I coolly inquired.

"Pay you one third of what he owes the bank?" repeated the Major, his face flushed with anger, aroused by my question.

"No, sir! I told you I'd be responsible for his share of the banking money."

"Oh! Very well, Major, I shall speak to Mr. McGovern about the matter to-morrow," I replied, coolly.

"Speak to him about what?" demanded the Major, excitedly.

"Why, about his play, to be sure," I rejoined. "He now owes the bank \$400. Should we to-morrow ask him for this, he might say he was only capping the game in order to induce his friends to play. But should we allow it to pass on without any understanding about the matter, he might, to-morrow night, or any night, win two or more thousands, and put it in his pocket. That would, no doubt, be very good for McGovern, but it wouldn't exactly suit me, Major, and I doubt if it would you, sir."

"You mustn't act in this manner, Jack. Wait until they show some evidence of guilt, before you commence convicting people in this way."

"There's nothing like being on the safe side, Major."

"No, no, Jack; whenever you enter into a business with a gentleman, do not insult him by showing, either by word or deed, that you doubt his honesty of purpose; and in this case it is especially for our interest to keep on the best of terms with McGovern. Without his protection, how in the world are we going to manage these brutes? To lose his friendship, Jack, would be to have our game broken up."

"I am desirous of continuing the game, sir, because I see money in it; but I don't care to have Mr. McGovern get any the best of me; and the surest way to prevent a misunderstanding, is to ask him to-morrow whether his play must count or not. He owes \$400, therefore he cannot be angry at a plain question upon the subject. If he says his play does not count, we are but slightly the losers, and know what we are doing."

"We mustn't say anything to him," he replied, doggedly. "We have already displeased him by closing our game to night, and refusing to reopen it. I am sorry I did so. Just let me manage this matter, Jack, will you? It will be all right in the end."

I saw it was quite useless trying to bring him to my way of thinking, consequently dropped the subject and proposed that we should retire for the night.

Mr. McGovern called at our rooms on the following morning, and reprimanded the Major for closing his game on the evening before, against the wishes of his friends. "Bad luck to me if I wouldn't rather lost a thousand dollars than had ye's done it. Begorra, if that's the game ye're goin' to play, ye'd better lave this city. The b'ys'll not bestandin' it, at all, at all; an' if they iver come here again, it's meself ye'll have to thank for it! Didn't they swear by this and by that, they'd niver set fut inside yer duress-agin?"

"Is it expected that we shall close our game whenever they want a ring fight in the room, and open it again when it is their pleasure to demand it?" I laughingly inquired.

"What the devil is it to you what they want? It's to win their money ye's are here, ain't it? Do ye's want to reform their morals, too?" he inquired, angrily.

"But, my friend, politely remonstrated the Major, "a faro-room is no place for a ring fight. I never witnessed so disgraceful a scene before, and I've been in the profession thirty years."

"Thin it's time, Major, ye were acquainted with the fashions of New York, if ye's mane to sthaye in it. Take me wurrud for that. An' more be token, if it wasn't gintlemin ye's had wid ye's last night, it's out o' the windy yersels and yer faro tools would a gone, by the howly St. Patrick, when ye's refused to open yer dirty game to the first gintlemen in New York!"

"This must be a rough country on faro dealers," said the Major, laughing.

"The divil a betther set o' b'ys in the worruld, but they won't stand any humbuggin', mind that now, Major."

"Well, sir, I shall endeavor to please your friends in future, Mr. McGovern," said the Major. "Tell your friends that I was afraid of the police arresting us, or I should have opened the game when they requested me to do so."

"Don't let the perlace trouble yer head. It's too wise the blaggards are, to interfere wid thim b'ys whin they're out on a lark. But I'll lave ye's now, an' see what I can do for ye's this avenin'." And away he went.

Early in the evening, three respectable looking men dropped in, and commenced playing; and later, McGovern came with four companions, but one of whom had been in our rooms on the previous evening. Our game became lively, and lasted till morning, without a "muss" of any kind having taken place. Again McGovern demanded checks from the bank, which I furnished, and he again neglected to pay for. As he played comparatively small, and there was a debt of \$400 hanging over him, the circumstance gave me little or no uneasiness. When the bank closed, he was loser \$280, and as he rose from his chair he turned towards the Major, and said, "I'll hand ye's that money in the mornin', Major." The latter responded by a nod. But the money was not forthcoming as promised, which led me to believe that McGovern had no idea of his play counting, and did not intend taking any unfair advantage of us in that way. As the Major was determined not to ask him whether his play counted or not, or, in other words, was afraid to ask him, and opposed my doing so in such a bitter manner, I made up my mind not to say any more to him on the subject nor to mention it to McGovern so long as he continued to lose, but to permit him to go ahead until the end of the month. But I had also made up my mind, that, in case he played himself even with the bank, I would come to an explanation with him, even if I was obliged to call him away from the faro-table to do so.

Our play gradually increased, until we had nightly a full table of betters. Disputes would frequently arise relative to the ownership of bets, which often resulted in damaged eyes and noses and the smashing of heads. These delectable amusements would frequently end in a ring fight, similar to that which we had enjoyed on our opening night. We got thoroughly used to this sort



of amusements, and when the combatants had punished each other to their satisfaction, we resumed our game. On three occasions small scrimmages having led to a general engagement, while the battle was raging hottest the Major and myself seized our faro-tools and money, and fled from the field of action, and did not return until the following day. Those who had checks when the row began kept them until we opened our bank on the following evening. Three times during the month was the service of a carpenter called into requisition, to repair damages caused by these little eccentricities of our customers. They broke our windows and doors, and smashed our chairs and tables. During the month, we were obliged to buy two extra dozens of chairs, and have a new faro-table made.

During these rows we were entirely free from police interference, and every disturbance was settled by science and muscle. When McGovern was present, he exerted his utmost influence to prevent these trials by battle, or angry altercations leading to free-fights; but when the first blow had been struck he was as much interested as the combatants themselves. One night a powerfully-built gentleman, having lost some sixty dollars against the bank, conceived the idea that he had been cheated, and, by way of reprisal, made a dive for the card-box in order to get his money back. He would have done so, and considerably more with it possibly, had not the Major, who was in the lookout chair, hung on to the card-box like grim death. Finding he could not wrest it from his hands, he struck him a stunning blow on the head with his fist, which knocked the poor Major sprawling on the floor, and dragged after him the card-box containing the money, which he held still in his hands. The ruffian was prevented from doing him any further mischief, by a blow from the dealing-box in my hands, which forced him to loosen his hold. At the same moment he was struck from behind with a chair, in the hands of one of our players. Several persons now began to kick him about the head and ribs; but, in spite of these solicitous attentions, he regained his feet, and struck out for his assailants. His brawny fist felled whoever it came in contact with, and several of his adversaries drew off rather suddenly to repair damages. But they increased faster than he could disable them, and as one after another joined in the melee, a storm of chairs was rained on his devoted head, and finally stretched him out

senseless. While in this situation he was kicked and thumped, and at last dragged down stairs, and thrown into the street in an almost denuded condition. For several moments he lay there as he had been thrown, and when he recovered his consciousness the first thing he asked for was some whiskey. Having swallowed it at a draught, he then stared around him to collect his scattered senses. At last, as he looked up to the building, his eyes fell on the lighted windows of our room. The sight seemed to recall to his memory the late stirring event, in which he had been an important actor. He shook his clenched fist at our windows, and muttered between his clenched teeth, "If I'd had a fair show, them 'uns couldn't a whipt one side o' me." He then got once more upon his pins, and quietly toddled off.

Our faro-table had been broken, and many of our chairs smashed, in this fracas, so we concluded to close for the night, in order to repair damages, and not to reopen until the following evening. The Major's wounds did not prove to be so severe as I feared, and I was much rejoiced to find that, with the exception of a few bruises, he was, to use his own expression, "as good as new, sir." While we were on our way to our hotel, we were overtaken by one of our players, by the name of Joseph Chapin. He was a small, attenuated specimen of humanity. That he was inclined to be sickly one did not need to be told, for his pinched features and shrunken form amply attested it. He did not seem to have the least fellowship for any one, always came and went by himself, and rarely engaged in conversation; though scarcely thirty years old, seemed to be burdened with the cares of age. Since we had opened our room, he had been one of its most constant frequenters. He seemed to have a sufficiency of money for his purpose, and played almost steadily against the bank, but lightly, and the most he would win or lose at a sitting was about \$50. The life of Mr. Chapin, and how he obtained his money, appeared to be a mystery which the boys could not fathom. And many were the turnings over which he got in our rooms in his absence from them. "Where the hell does Joe Chapin get his blunt from? I never seed 'im doin' nothin' for it; I wonder if he dusesnt stand in with the cross-men? But he never jines 'em!" After which the speaker proceeded to take several leisurely whiffs at a remarkably dirty meerschaum. The speaker was one of Mr. McGovern's friends; the time early in the evening, but few persons being

present in the room. "Maybe his gal comes out to him," suggested another gentleman present.

"The dirty ghost! and is it him have a gal? he's too white-livered for that," laughed another.

"He's allers got the blunt, anyhow, an' that tells he's a keener," dreamily responded the first speaker, with his pipe in his mouth.

"Joe Chapin, gintlemen', is as fine a pinman as ye'll find in the cithy o' New York, an' the divil a man in it can put his name to the bottom av a check as will as Joe himself."

These remarks were received with many exclamations of surprise and wonder, and one gentleman present gave vent to a long, low whistle, followed by a "Wh—a—at! and that's his game, is it?"

"What the divil do ye mane by axing is that his game?" demanded Mr. McGovern, pretending to be very indignant. "Did I say anythin' wrong o' the man? Am I a man capable of slanderingin' a gintleman? The divil a bit. Not Phil. McGovern, begorra!"

But whenever Joe's foes measured tongues with him, they stood about as much chance as a novice would have in crossing swords with an accomplished duelist. He had a supple tongue, which was never at a loss to hurl bitter gibes towards his adversaries. He seemed also to have a perfect knowledge of every one's character, antecedents, and present social standing, and he was more pleased to show up the deformities of poor human nature than its redeeming qualities. The bullies held him in respectful fear, because, on the few occasions in which he had been concerned in rows, he had shown an ugly disposition to use a knife—an instrument held in great detestation by your muscular expounder of the science of hitting from the shoulder. Joe and myself had gotten on very amicably together, and he often favored me with a dissertation on the characters of those who frequented our rooms, and if any one of them ever possessed the smallest virtue, Joe had, unfortunately, forgotten the fact.

"Delightful shindy that, Major!" remarked Mr. Chapin, when he had overhauled us.

"A brutal affair, sir, very brutal," returned the Major, doubtless still suffering from the weight of the fellow's fist.

"He's a whale. If he'd had a fair start, now, he'd a cleared out that McGovern gang."

"Do you know him?" I inquired.

"Yes! His name's Jack Kline; he keeps order for Johnny Walker's dance-house in the Points."

"He's an infernal robber," angrily cried the Major.

"He ain't no worse than the rest on 'em, McGovern and his gang; they're all on it."

"On it! On what?" demanded the Major.

"The rob," laconically replied Mr. Chapin.

"Mr. McGovern is a gentleman, sir, and my friend," said the Major, in his stiffest manner, and stopping in his walk to eye Chapin from head to foot with a glance which ought to have annihilated him.

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed Chapin, on whom the Major's dignity did not seem to take much effect. "He a gentleman! What, Oily McGovern? Why, Major, he's the dirtiest thief in New York."

"I am afraid you're somewhat prejudiced against the gentleman," I remarked.

"I always am against low-flung villains and cowardly rowdies."

"Has he lived long in this city?" I asked.

"About fifteen years. He'd been transported to Botany Bay, had he not left Ireland when he did, and he left it in a hurry, too, I can tell you. He first opened a three-cent grog-shop and a fence in the Five Points; that's where he got his first start. Three or four years afterwards he fitted up that rum-mill of his in Chatham street, and ever since it was opened it has been the resort of the better class of knucksmen, cracksmen, low politicians, prize-fighters, and that kind of stock."

"They say he has a good deal of political influence in the city?" I asked, merely by way of keeping up a conversation, as I knew anything uttered by any person whatever, against McGovern, was anything but agreeable to the Major's feelings.

"Yes, he has with the stock that visits his whiskey-mill, and some among the lower orders of Irish."

"What has made him so popular with the Irish?" I asked.

"A hundred things," replied Chapin. "He gets city contracts, and keeps them in work; trusts them for rum at his dead-fall; gets up prize-fights for their amusement, and whenever they're 'pulled' by the police, he gets them out of quod."

"Then he must have some weight with the police?" I said.

"Weight with the police! You may bet he has, when he can send any one he takes a notion, over to the island, or up the river."

"What do you mean by over on the island or up the river?"

"Why, can have them sent to the penitentiary or Sing Sing."

"Oh! that's coming it rather rough, Chapin."

"Well, you just let anybody who hasn't friends in New York, just stack up against McGovern and his crew, that wants to; but I tell you they'll soon find themselves where the dogs won't bite em', and they'll stand an almighty poor chance o' getting their liberty too."

"But how can he have an innocent man sent to prison?"

"Because he can get fifty men to go into the witness box and swear to just what he wants 'er to. He's in with all the detectives, and the heads of police departments, and is influential with many of the police judges, and other high officials; that's how he can do it."

"That's a hard customer to have for an enemy, ain't it, Major?" I asked.

"Pshaw! Mr. Chapin is amusing himself at our expense," contemptuously replied the Major.

"Well, Major, that's the politest way I've heard yet of telling a man he lies; but take a fool's advice, if you want to stay in New York, don't make an enemy of Phil McGovern."

"Mr. McGovern is my friend, sir, and has no cause to be my enemy, sir. I never make enemies, sir," replied the Major, becoming more and more heated with every repetition of the "sir."

Fearing an angry altercation might ensue between them, I asked Chapin if McGovern, that he knew of, ever injured the business of any faro-dealer in New York.

"No strange gambler has dealt faro in the city for the last three years, but McGovern has black-mailed him in some way or other. If he couldn't cajole him into letting him have an interest in the game without putting up his own money, he set his ruffianly gang on to break up the game. And he has put up jobs with the police to have gamblers arrested, thrown into prison, and there kept until they were willing to come down handsomely, in order to regain their liberty; and for no other reason in the world, only because they wouldn't stand black-mailing."

"Well, Chapin, if that's the case, I'll try and keep on the right side of him during our stay here."

"You can do that in only one way—by letting the dirty thief rob you in some way or another," said Chapin, who now, with a "good-night," left us, and crossed the street, on his way to his own lodgings.

"Chapin draws a pretty rough picture of Mr. Mac," I observed.

"Now, Jan't' how on earth can you give credence to that sleek, slanderous viper? I've never heard that fellow speak well of any one yet."

"That's true, Major, nor have I ever heard any one speak well of him. But there must be some truth or cause for him speaking in the manner he did of McGovern, and I'm afraid we'll have trouble with him yet."

Though the Major vouchsafed me no reply, it was evident to me that his faith in that worthy had been considerably shaken. In one respect he was entirely undeceived. In Washington he had believed him to be a gentleman in habits and manners, as well as in integrity of principle. In New York he found him to be the associate of rowdies, and entering with zest into their brutal habits and amusements. Whether he had begun to suspect his honesty of purpose, I could not ascertain, but I thought so. However, they always seemed very friendly, and the Major invariably treated McGovern with the most punctilious politeness, while he showed the Major the most respectful attention whenever he met him at the hotel, where he sometimes came, or in our gambling-room. But he never had invited him to his place of business, and did not seem at all desirous of being seen in company with him on the street, or other public places, though the Major, on leaving Washington, had no doubt expected more flattering attention from his friend, Mr. McGovern, while sojourning in the great metropolis.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

## SQUARING ACCOUNTS.

The end of the month arrived, and with it our day of settlement. Mr. McGovern, the Major, and myself, were alone in our gambling room. When I had figured up, and given a few preliminary "hems," I thus addressed my audience. "Gentlemen, the bank is winner, in the month, \$8,700 cash, and the \$1,700 owed it by Mr. McGovern."

"Is it me owes the bank sixteen hundred dollars?" exclaimed Mr. McGovern, with a face expressive of the blankest astonishment.

"That's the amount of your losings, at your various plays against it," I coolly replied.

"To h—l with ye's! An' is that what yer at, ye thieves o' the worruld! Begorra, that's fine tratement, anyhow, an' meself working fur ye's ivery night o' me life to bring players to ye's! An' I owe the bank sixteen hundred dollars! faith, ye's won't starve for cheek, anyhow!" said Mr. McGovern, rising from his chair, and rapidly pacing the room. Then suddenly stopping in his walk, he faced me, and said, "Begorra, I made a great mistake when I took ye's for a gentleman."

"Such language, sir," interrupted the Major, "is outrageous, and there is no justification whatever for it, sir. Mr. Morris demands of you what he thinks to be right. I told him myself, sir, on the first night we opened here, that your play against the bank was a genuine one, because I believed it to be so myself, sir!"

"A giuwwine one, is it? The devil a bit! If I'd wanted to play in earnest fornenst it, wouldn't I towld ye's so like a man? There's no humbuggin' about Phil McGovern!"

"Very well, sir!" said the Major, "if you say your play against the bank was not a genuine one, have it so, sir!"

"Be J—s, it's myself's glad to see some rason left in ye's at any rate, an' as the little matther is explained, I'll be civil enough to say I'm sorry we had any words on such a dirty subject."

"In that case," I resumed, "the bank is winner \$8,700."

"Troth, it's in bad luck 'tis, not to have won fifty thousand. But it's thankful we ought to be for shmall things."

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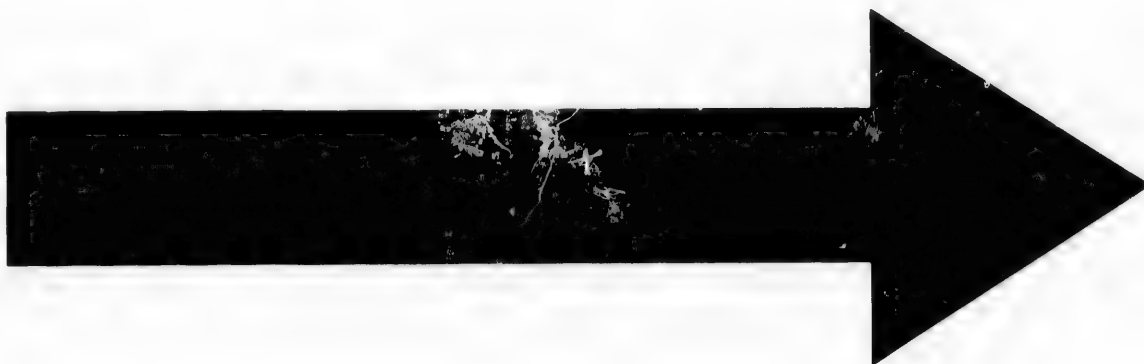
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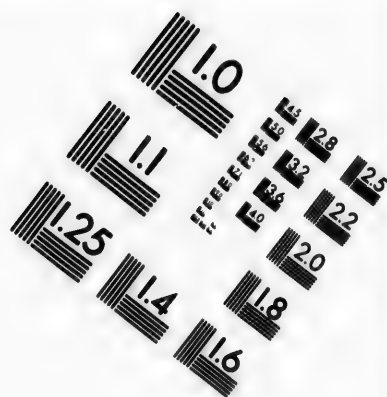
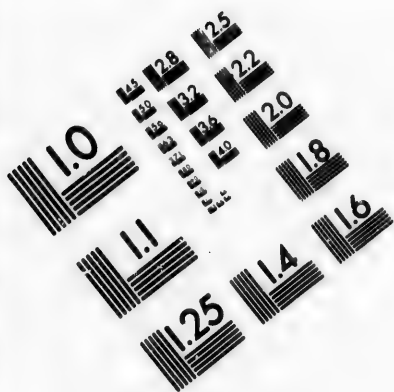
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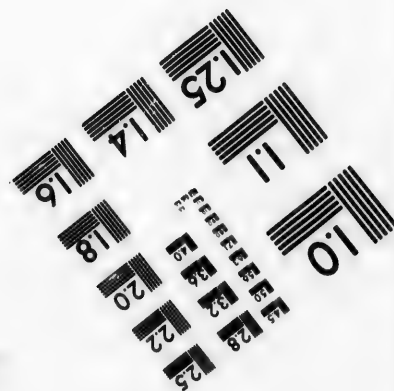
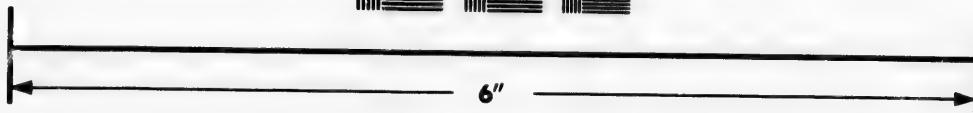
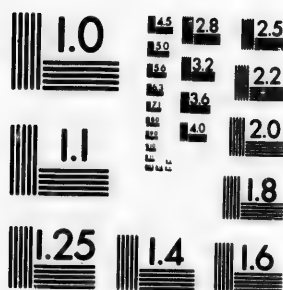
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"Out of this sum is to come \$514 for the fitting up of this room," I continued.

"Fair and aisy, Misther Morris. Split that small item betwane yerself an' the Major, as ye plaze, for the divil a cint of it comes out o' my share o' the money, mind that, now!"

"Tis but right, sir, that you should pay your share of the expenses, sir!" said the Major.

"Divil a bit o' right in it, Major. The room was for yer own convenience, entirely. 'Twas myself was to bring the b'ys to ye's, an' didn't I bring lots uv 'em; so pay yer own expinses, for divil a cent of it 'll ye's get from Phil McGovern."

"Very well, sir, if you think that just, have it so, sir!" exclaimed the Major, in a voice choked with passion.

"Well, what shall I do now?" I asked.

"Do, is it? Settle up the game, ye spalpeen, an' give to each man what belongs to him."

"Then there is \$2,900 coming to you, sir," I politely replied, taking no notice of his insulting manner.

"By the powers, that's good, anyhow. Thin hand me \$1,900, me b'y, an' I'll lave the thousand in the bank."

"Three thousand dollars, sir, is too small a sum to bank such a game as we are dealing here, Mr. McGovern," interposed the Major. "We should have a bank of at least \$6,000."

"The divil a bit small is it, an' if yer players can win it, sure I wish 'em joy of it. Whin they win thim \$3,000, I'll bring 'em twice as much more to win in the snap o' me fingers."

Three thousand dollars in bank, and one-third belonging to Mr. McGovern! Well, that was better than when we first started in partnership with that worthy, for he had not a single dollar in the game.

Again deceived! Poor, generous-hearted, chivalric old Major! And for the fortieth time perhaps in your life, that, meaning no evil itself, thought none of its fellow creatures. Your generous, credulous, and unsuspecting nature formed a rich pasturage for crafty knaves to batten upon!

The footsteps of McGovern had scarcely died away upon the staircase, when the Major seized his hat and cane, and hastily left the room, to find relief for his pent-up wrath in the open air. He felt, poor old man, humiliated, and feared my taunts; he need not have done so, however, for I had no wish to add to his torments.

Shortly after his leaving, I lifted up the window-sash and looked into the street. There, a few doors away, stood the Major, motionless on the curb-stone, with his eyes fixed on vacancy, evidently in the state of mind described by the phrase, "a brown study." I withdrew my head and closed the window, lest he might suddenly turn and detect me in the act of watching him.

That night our game ran until daylight, and we closed it loser \$490. Neither McGovern nor any of his cronies came near the place during the evening; but shortly after lighting up on the following one, McGovern made his appearance, and showing signs of being in a great hurry, he walked up to the Major and asked him if he had \$1,000 he could loan him for a few days.

"I have not, that amount of money belonging to you in the game, sir," replied the Major, coldly. "We lost four hundred and ninety dollars last night."

"An' what the devil if ye did? Can't ye give me a thousand dollars for a few days, when I made it?"

"Our money, sir, is all deposited in bank, except what I carry with me to bank this game, sir!" said the Major, still more coldly.

"Blood-an-ouns! Can't you untherstand a gintleman when he spakes English. I want the money an' must have it; there'll be lashins left to carry on your game, if ye's give me a thousand out av what ye have there."

"If you desire it, sir, I will pay over to you what belongs to you out of the banking money."

"How much might that be, Major?"

"Eight hundred and thirty-six dollars and sixty cents, sir," replied the exact Major.

"Give it to me, thin!"

The Major counted out the money and handed it over to him.

"Now, Major darlint, jist lind me the loan of enough to make up the thousand; sure I'll give it to ye, in yer fist, in a day or two!"

"I have no more money in the bank belonging to you," answered the Major, in the freezing tones he had used throughout the interview.

"Is it denyin' me the loan of a few dirty dollars that ye are," roared Mr. McGovern, in a rage. "Begorra, there's frinds for ye! An' after all I done for ye's here. By the Howly St. Patherick, I'd a bet the full o' both me flats o' hundther dollar bills, I could

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served I was whin I took ye's undther me wing, and brought ye's  
to New York."

"Mr. McGovern, we are now, sir, arranging a business transac-  
tion. I have paid over to you, at your desire, your stake in our  
bank. Whenever you wish to resume your interest with us here,  
you can do so by putting up your money."

The red face of Mr. McGovern waxed purple. He had made  
a miss instead of a hit.

"What the devil do ye mane, Major? Bad luck to the cint I'd  
touch at all, at all, only I've pressin' nade of it just now. Haven't  
I towld ye's always, that whenever ye's wanted money I'd lave  
it wid ye's in a moment?"

"If you desire to retain your interest in the game, we want  
your money *now*," replied the Major.

"Begorra, but that same's a shabby way to thrate an' owld  
frind whin he's short taken."

"I'm treating you with perfect justice, sir," the Major returned.

"An' I'm to get no share in the bank till I hands ye's the cash,  
is it that ye mane, Major?"

"None, sir," was the laconic reply.

"Thin take a frind's advice, an' close yer dhrthy game if ye've  
any respect for the heads that ye carry on yer shouldthers."

"Do you mean to threaten me, you infernal scoundrel!" shout-  
ed the Major, springing to his feet and snatching his cane.

"Divil a bit!" replied Mr. McGovern, in the most lamb-like  
tones; "it's only offerin' ye a bit o' frindly advice I am. Musha,  
it's a grate frind I am to ye's intirely, Major. Good avenin' to  
ye's, gentlemen," he said, with a mock bow, "fur fear the look of  
Phil McGovern might choke ye's, I'll take him out o' yer sight,"  
with which parting salute he left the room.

The Major, after this little rencontre, paced up and down the  
room in a state of terrible excitement; but according to his  
custom in such cases, he did not give vent to his feelings in  
curses, as another might have done, but only paced up and down  
in moody silence, with his cane stuck under his arm, at a right  
angle.

"Well, Major," I ventured presently, "what do you intend  
doing now?"

"I shall leave for Richmond to-morrow, and stay there, sir.

It's the only place fit for a gentleman to live in. I feel," he said with a perceptible effort, after a slight pause, "that I have deserved this punishment, and am provoked and disgusted with myself, for associating so long with such a set of unmitigated rascals and scoundrels. I ought to have left the city the next day after the disgraceful row the infernal ruffians kicked up the first night we opened here; I did think of doing it at the time, but the expense which we had incurred in getting here, and fitting up this place, together with the amount of money which I saw a chance of winning, decided me on remaining, against my better judgment—an error I now greatly regret."

"Then you have concluded to remain here no longer than to-morrow!"

"No, sir; I shall start for Richmond to-morrow morning, as I told you."

"Then I shall remain here and deal faro," I replied, with the utmost coolness.

He wheeled suddenly around and gazed at me in speechless astonishment, as if he thought I had surely gone demented. Finally he found voice to ask, "Are you mad?"

"No! but I mean to see if that contemptible Irish ruffian can prevent me from dealing my game here."

"I would not join you, sir, in your venture, for all the money I've seen in the infernal place since I came into it. I don't believe even our lives would be safe since that brutal villain has become our enemy."

"I don't wish or expect you to run any risk of the kind, Major; I'll go it alone!"

At first he thought I was on the bluff, but when he found I was in sober earnest, and meant doing exactly as I said, he tried every argument of which he was master, to dissuade me from so dangerous an undertaking as he believed this to be. He begged and coaxed me to abandon my insane project, as he called it, and prophesied it would end in my being murdered or sent to State prison. But I was inexorable, and determined on carrying out my foolhardy enterprise.

The next evening I accompanied him on board the Richmond steamer, where, before bidding him "good-bye," he extracted from me a solemn promise to keep him posted up on all my movements in New York, and that, in case I failed to succeed

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there as I anticipated, I would immediately join him in Rich-  
mond.

Even at the last moment the old fellow tried to induce me to  
abandon my foolish project and accompany him, offering to leave  
the steamer, and wait for the next one, in order to give me an  
opportunity for making my preparations for leaving; but I was  
inexorable.

"Good-bye, Jack, my boy," he said, as the gang-plank was  
about being withdrawn. "You know where Richmond lies, and  
whatever happens, you've always got a friend there, in Major  
George Jenks."

At that moment I would have given the last dollar I possess-  
ed in the world, had my baggage been on board that steamer,  
and I ready to accompany the Major on his exodus from New  
York. But foolish pride withheld me, and prevented me from  
putting into execution the greatest desire of my heart.

I watched the steamer until her smoke-stacks were lost in the  
dim distance, then retraced my steps to my hotel, feeling more  
sorrowful and lonely than I had ever felt before in my life.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### IN THE LOCK-UP.

On my return from seeing the Major off for Richmond, I im-  
mediately sought the advice and assistance of Mr. Chapin, for  
want of better, made him acquainted with the state of my  
affairs, and confided to him my intention to keep open my faro-  
rooms at all hazards. Having heard me to the end, he gave a  
discouraging shake of his head, and at once advised me to fol-  
low the Major as soon as practicable.

"You'd make a d—n nice job of it, going up against McGovern  
and his bruisers. Why, they'll bust you all up in five minutes,  
and what are you going to do about it? No, no, McGovern and  
his stripe rule the roost here, and my best advice to you, as a  
friend, is to close up yer crib, and make yourself scarce round  
these diggin's, fur a while, anyhow."

But this advice by no means coincided with my desires.



"Where's that fellow, Kline, that got such a thrashing in our rooms the other night?" I asked, not even thanking him for his advice.

"Down at Johnny Walker's dance-house."

"I'll give that fellow five dollars a night, if he can protect my room."

"C-h-r-i-s-t! that fellow wouldn't be a marker for that gang of Phil McGovern's. But hold on, I've got it; there's Clem Jones, another Five-Pointer, and the best fighter in North America. Now, if you can get him and Kline joined, you'd have a full team in harness. Could you afford to hire both?"

"I can afford to pay for any protection."

"Then by God you're all right!" swore Mr. Chapin, jumping up from his chair and dancing a Jim Crow jig round the room. "C-h-r-i-s-t!" he sung out, when he had finished his exercise. "Them two fellers can whip, in a lump, all the shoulder-bitters in New York."

"Where is Mr. Jones to be found?"

"Well, he makes his loafing place around the Five Points."

"Couldn't you find them, and bring them both to my room, right away?" I asked.

"I don't know—I'll try to;" and off he started without another word.

Two hours had scarcely gone around, before Mr. Chapin entered my faro room with the two aforementioned gentlemen. Both were large, powerfully built specimens of the *genus homo*. Their powerful frames and brawny limbs, together with their coarse, heavy features, stamped them at once with that gladiatorial distinction which they enjoyed in common with many of their compeers of the bloody Sixth. With them, a face was a "mug" to be "mashed;" a man, a lay figure to be sent to "grass," with scientific precision, by a blow from their sledgehammer fists. According to Mr. Chapin, they had been a terror to the rowdies for years, who visited the low dance-houses in the classic neighborhood of the Five Points. I opened my business with these muscular gentlemen by offering them a dose of whiskey, and when they had tossed it down their capacious throats, I proceeded to explain what I required of them. We easily came to terms; Messrs. Kline and Jones agreeing to perform what fighting I required, in consideration of the paltry sum

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of five dollars each per night, payable nightly on the closing of the bank. "The services which I require of you, gentlemen," I said, "is to protect my room. To that end, I shall expect you to be on hand every evening when I light up, and remain until I close for the night. You are to remain in the street, and keep yourselves from observation as much as practicable, because I do not wish your business here to be suspected by any one except ourselves. I shall give you a signal by which you will know if you are wanted. You are not to come unless you hear that signal, but when you do come, come with a rush." I took from my pocket a dog whistle given me by Mr. Lane on the day we parted in Richmond, and blew a shrill blast. "That's the signal, gentlemen, and when you hear that you may know you're wanted, and can't get here too quick. If I only desire you to put some one into the street who is disturbing the peace and comfort, and making a muss in the room, you are to do it as gently as possible, and put the person out without hurting him if you can. But if any rowdies attempt to break into my place, or in any manner commit violence about the premises, I'll give you two dollars extra for every one of them that you will pummel well."

"Bet yer guts we'll give em J—s," said Mr. Kline, with an ominous shake of his head, at the same time straightening his right arm and throwing out his clenched fist with a jerk in imitation of that movement known among the "fancy" as "delivering from the shoulder."

"Air you specting ennybuddy's goin ter make a smash, here?" inquired Mr. Jones.

"Well, I cannot say," I replied, "but I'm afraid of that McGovern gang, and if you see any of them prowling about the place, keep your eyes open."

"I knows them roosters."

"Wa-al now, if Kline and me can't clean out them cheese-eaters, I'll never show my mug to the Pints again," said Mr. Jones.

"There ain't no hazard there, Jonesy, old boy. It's a flake o' snow to a brick house you fellers can do it," cried Mr. Chapin.

"I think, Mr. Kline, you've a small settlement of your own to make with McGovern, if I'm not mistaken."

"Not as I knows on," he replied.

"Do you remember the fight you were engaged in, in this room, a few weeks ago?" I asked.

"Yes, I do! Them fellers knocked the kinks out o' me, then, kinder."

"It was because you had not a fair chance. While you were fighting with the others, McGovern hit you on the head from behind with a chair, and knocked you down."

"You don't say so! Is that so?"

"Yes, he did, and it was a cowardly act," I replied.

"What more could you expect from such a dirty, cowardly louse?" asked Mr. Chapin.

"I'll punch his head in for that," said Mr. Kline, shaking a brawny fist in the air.

"He richly deserves it, Mr. Kline," I responded.

"I'll eat that red head o' hissen off fur that," said Mr. Kline, gritting his teeth together till the sound was painfully distinct, and caused the cold chills to run down my back-bone.

My mercenary guardians now left me, promising to be at their posts at the appointed time.

"It wasn't Phil McGovern that knocked Kline down the other night," said Chapin, after they had gone; "it was Joe Delancy."

"What's the difference who knocked him down?" I replied, "so he thinks it was McGovern, it answers my purpose."

"Phew!" he whistled. "Not a bad job for a youngster like you."

I caused a strong lock to be placed on the door, and a wicket window to be put into it, that I might see the faces of those demanding entrance, before admitting them. Several persons who had rendered themselves nuisances while there I shut out of the room, and received a sound cursing for my pains, but I happily recovered from its effects. My guardians were duly at their posts each night at the appointed hour. Neither McGovern nor any of those persons who formerly visited us in his company, ever came near me, and I began to feel quite secure.

I now began to be patronized by a more respectable class, since I had rid the room of many roughs and loafers, who had formerly made it their loafing place. But the game was nothing like as lively as it had been before. Still, it was every day improving, and though under considerable expense, I had strong

hopes, if not molested, of making money. I kept a negro servant to attend the door, and paid Mr. Chapin ten dollars per day to assist me in dealing the game. This was, for the times, high wages, but Chapin was useful in many ways to me. He was acquainted with many respectable faro-players, and also with the rougher characters I was trying to keep away from my place. For ten days everything went on smoothly and peaceably, and my bank was about \$600 winner, besides its attendant expenses. The constant fear of a visitation from the roughs, under which I first labored, wore off gradually, and as time passed without any demonstration from that quarter, I began to dream of security, and to make up my mind that McGovern had abandoned his hostile intentions, if he had entertained any. But we are born to disappointments in this world, and I was not to miss my birthright.

One night while the game was going quietly forward, and the hands of the clock pointed to twelve, a violent ring at the bell caused me to rise from my chair and approach the wicket to reconnoitre. I discovered on the outside the figures of eight or nine persons, and with his face pressed closely against the wicket, Joe Delancy, the constant companion of McGovern, and standing close behind him I discovered the pock-marked features of another of his gang, named Larry Mooney.

"What's wanted, gentlemen?" I inquired.

"Wanted, is it? We want to get in. What the h—l do ye suppose we want," answered the voice of Delancy.

"You must excuse me, gentlemen; my room is private."

"Is it? Then I'll d—n soon make it public," roared Delancy, at the same time placing his shoulder to the door, and throwing upon it the whole weight of a by no means delicate frame. But the door did not yield to his strength. "Give me a lift here, b'ys," he shouted, and in an instant Mooney and two more of the gang came to his assistance. "Heave ho, and here she goes," sung out Delancy in the true Matelot strain, and the whole party surged with might and main against the door. Quick as thought I rushed to the window, threw up the sash, and, putting my whistle to my lips, sounded upon it a shrill note. I then ordered Chapin to buy in what checks were among the players; but it was unnecessary, as they had already passed them in, and received their money for them. But three players had any chips at the

time, consequently, that part of the business was soon finished. Altogether, we had but seven of our patrons present when the attack on the door commenced, and these showed the most abject and cowardly fear the moment the party on the outside commenced trying to break it down. The room which looked on the street was on the second story, and had no exit except the staircase and door now in possession of the rowdies. Our players rushed to the windows, and would have tried to make their escape to the street below, by jumping from them, which would certainly have resulted in broken limbs, if not loss of life to some of them, had not Chapin and myself prevented them from doing such a rash act.

"There's no danger, gentlemen," cried Mr. Chapin; "keep cool a moment and you will see one of the nicest mills you ever saw in your life.

Jones and Kline were on the track of the McGovernites, and cat-like and unseen had been watching their movements since their first appearance in the street, and on their ascending the stairway had crept to the entrance, where they waited impatiently for the signal to commence hostilities.

A few of those powerful surges against the rickety old door tore off its lock, and in rushed the McGovernites (some of them with more force than elegance, caused by the sudden yielding of the lock) with the redoubtable Delancy at their head. He took a rapid survey of the room, and seeing nothing to oppose him, and only a set of cowering men huddled near the windows, he shouted to his followers, "Come on, b'ys, let's clane out the d—n crib. Dash iverthing ye's find out o' the windys." And suiting the action to the word, and by way of encouraging his comrades, he seized hold of the faro-table, on which were all the tools of the game. Some of his companions came at once to his assistance, and the table was already lifted from the floor, and being borne towards the windows, when the ruffians were pounced upon by Kline and Jones, both armed with clubs. It was a complete surprise, and a complete walk-over for Mr. Kline and his companion. The McGovernites were allowed no time to recover from their surprise, until they were knocked off their pins, and lay stretched on the floor, to a man. In this condition they were kicked and stamped by the boots of Jones and Kline, until they lost all consciousness. After which those worthless threw them

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one by one into the street, like so many slaughtered hogs, to recover the best way they could. The whole affair, from beginning to end, did not last more than ten minutes, and the dragging the victims from the room, and throwing them into the street, occupied at least half that time. Our patrons fled incontinently as soon as the McGovernites were felled by the prowess of Messrs. Jones and Kline. The work of these worthies being finished, Chapin and myself were fain to put out the lights, our servant having escaped from the scene with the players. We then set up the broken door against the entrance, and descended into the street, which was lighted by a dim moon in its last quarter. Lights could be seen shining in many of the buildings along the Bowery; but not a soul was stirring, as far as we could see up and down the broad street. Mr. Jones and his comrade were standing on the pavement at the foot of the stairs, discussing their late battle while gazing at their victims.

I now began to feel uneasy about the condition of the defeated rowdies, and asked Kline if he thought any of them had been seriously injured.

"Injured!" exclaimed Mr. Chapin, in the greatest astonishment. "Why, you can't hurt one o' them roosters; they relish a lickin' every now and then."

I went up to one who was lying doubled up near the pavement, caught hold of his leg and shook it, in order to see if I could not bring him to a state of consciousness, when he suddenly raised his foot, and let fly such a kick at me as sent me into the middle of the street, and laid me out there on the flat of my back. I was rescued from this perilous position by the benevolent Jones, who soothingly remarked, "Sarved ye right, he oughter kicked the head o' ye. Don't you know them fellers is dangerouserest when they're dead."

On the way to my hotel, we stepped into a coffee-house and "liquored," after which I gave my guardians their wages, and two dollars each, as was agreed, for the eight McGovernites they had so unmercifully drubbed; which they received with many acknowledgments, and promised to be at their post on the following night. Mr. Chapin accompanied me to my hotel, and as he was about leaving me, I asked him if he thought I should succeed in keeping my room open.

"Keep it open!" exclaimed my companion. "C —t, yer up

in the pictures now. Whenever one has won a first-class fight in New York, he's established himself."

When I had eaten my breakfast in the morning, I went down to the gambling room, where I found my servant settling things after last night's scrimmage; I sent for a carpenter, and had the broken-down door repaired, and in the evening I was once more ready to receive company. I still felt uneasy, lest some of the rowdies were severely hurt; not that I entertained, personally, any sympathy for them. Had the whole batch died from the effects of the thrashing they had received, it would not have cost me a moment's sorrow. But the thought of being dragged within the meshes of the law, on the charge of aiding and abetting murder, was anything but pleasant.

Directly Mr. Chapin made his appearance, I sent him out to try and gather some news of the discomfited McGovernites. In about an hour he returned, and I could almost have hugged his skeleton carcass to my bosom, when he informed me that none of the rowdies were dead, but, instead of that, were all but two on their feet and ready to stand another flogging.

"And did you learn if they were seriously hurt?"

"One on 'em has got his head mashed pretty badly."

"Is he likely to die?"

"C—t! yer couldn't kill one o' them roosters with a chain shot!"

Neither on that night nor the following one, did any of our patrons come to our place. The row had scared them away. On the third night, however, three dropped in, played an hour or so, and departed. Chapin and myself sat up until after midnight, but as there were no signs of more customers, we finally closed our room and went to bed. On the following night, as soon as we had lighted up, Chapin and my servant, as was their custom at that hour, went to their suppers, leaving me alone in my room. They had been gone scarcely five minutes, when the door-bell was rung violently. I hastened to open the wicket and look out. I discovered several persons in the uniform of policemen, and, as far as I could see from my place of espial, the stairway was blocked by them. I therefore concluded their numbers were considerable, eight or ten at least.

"Open that door!" was the surly reply to my question of

"What do you want, gentlemen?"

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"On what authority must I open my door?"

"I'm a lieutenant of police. Do you see that?" answered the person standing at the wicket, at the same time pointing to the silver star on the breast of his coat.

"Yes, I see it," I replied, "but whoever you are, you cannot come into my rooms without you have the warrant of a magistrate," was my answer.

"Open the door, or I'll break it in!" was his response.

"Do it at your peril!" I rejoined.

"Burst in the door," ordered he of the silver star. He was immediately obeyed, and my room was filled with a swarm of blue coats, headed by a tall, powerful, red-haired and sandy whiskered fellow, who claimed to be their lieutenant. He took a rapid survey of the room, and seeing no one but myself there, he roughly accosted me with, "Where's your companions, young man?"

"I am sole master here," I replied.

"None o' your impudence, youngster! where's them hired murderers o' yourn! Kline and Jones, and that sneak thief, Chapin?"

"You've got a d--n sight of effrontery, you mean scoundrel, to break into a man's house without a warrant from a magistrate, at any rate, and it may cost you dear, before it's done with."

"Put the carbies on the kid," drawled out the lieutenant to one of his subordinates, and in a moment more I was adorned with a portion of the jewelry belonging to the city. "Take everything here to the station-house, and take the kid to the lock-up," ordered the red-haired lieutenant; and I soon had ocular demonstration of the ease with which a man, guilty of no crime, may be entombed in a prison.

On our arrival at the station-house I was relieved of my "darbies," and handed over to an ancient citizen, who lost no time in going through my clothes, and relieving me of my watch and \$1,024 in money. Being ever in dread of my present misfortune, and also afraid of being robbed, I had, since I parted from the Major, kept no money in my possession, except about \$1,000, which I considered sufficient for banking my game. The remainder, amounting to something like \$8,000, I kept deposited in the Bank of North America.

I gave my name to the clerk as John Grimes, and demanded



of him a receipt for my money and watch. "We don't give any," he gruffly answered. "Then I call upon you, and you, and you," I said, pointing to the policemen who were present, "to take notice that a gold watch, Tobias, maker, No. 1960, and #1024, in New York city bank bills, have been taken from me; I wish you to bear this in mind, gentlemen, for I may have to call upon you to prove it." A general laugh was the only response to this appeal.

"Lock the kid in No 17," ordered a gentleman behind the desk.

In a few moments I was gazing out onto a small paved courtyard, from between the iron bars of my cell door. I had the apartment all to myself, "the monarch of all I surveyed," in a limited sense. I paced the floor of my narrow quarters until I heard the city clocks strike five, when I threw myself on the straw in one corner, and was soon lost to life's cares and sorrows.

"Tired nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep."

I was awakened from my slumbers by the unlocking of my prison door, and a coarse voice fell on my ear with "Here's yer bruckfast." I looked up and saw two men, one of whom held in one hand a bunch of keys, while with the other he held open the door of my cell. The other fellow placed on the floor a small tin pan. The door was locked again, and both vanished. I could hear the locking and unlocking of doors, and the buzz of human voices. The sun was sending a small stream of rays into my cell, and I arose from my bed of straw, stiff and unrefreshed, and examined with some curiosity the contents of the pan, in which I had been informed was my "bruckfast." It contained about a pint of thin broth, and a bone with a few shreds of meat attached; also two ship biscuits. I had no stomach for this feast, and to procure better I shouted through the grating of my cell door for some one to come to me; but no one answered my call. I shouted the louder, and kept on doing so, in hopes some one might come. Presently a coarse, ill-looking, worse clad and supremely dirty fellow, showed his burly form before the door, and putting his face close to the grating, said, in a cold, low voice, "If I comes 'n there to ye's, I'll make yer screech worse than that of a cow-hide, ye d—n thief." This cold-blooded threat, uttered in such a matter-of-fact tone, struck me with horror, and caused me to recall from my cell door.

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"What the h--l are ye's makin' o' all that fuss about, hey? Why don't yer spake, ye d--n whelp?" he angrily demanded.

"I see no justification for such harsh language as that, sir!" I replied.

"What do yer want? damn yer," he again demanded, without noticing my remark.

"I want to get somebody to go to a restaurant, and get me something to eat. I've money to pay for it."

"There's yer bruckfast, an' if yer don't like it, leave it, d--n yer, and don't let me hear any more wind from that trap o' yourn, or I'll bust it. D'ye hear, youngster?" he said, pointing his finger at me in a threatening manner. He said no more, but, to my great relief, now left me.

About an hour before dark my cell door was again opened, another pan was left on the floor and the door relocked without a word being spoken to me. The second meal offered was precisely the counterpart of the first—some broth, a boiled bone, and two ship biscuits. I paced m-- cell until wearied down, when I sought my bed of straw, and slept soundly until morning. My jailers again opened my door, and again left the same kind of meal they had before, and removed the two pans, with their contents untasted. While doing so I asked when I was to have an examination; but they only looked at me for a moment with a vacant stare, and then locked my cell door. Hunger had now gotten the best of me, and although I could not yet stomach the contents of the pan, I ate the crackers with a great relish. In the evening the same stereotyped meal was left me, and I passed the night in the same manner as the two preceding ones.

During my sojourn in the city, I had taken pains to acquaint myself with the "modus operandi" of its police courts, and also its upper courts of justice, and was perfectly well aware that it was the duty of the persons arresting me to have arraigned me before some police justice on the following morning. I had also informed myself concerning its gambling laws, and knew the extreme penalty for dealing any banking game of chance was \$50; consequently I had no fears in that direction. Neither did I entertain any concerning the thrashed McGovernites, for I had learned positively, on the day preceding my arrest, that they were all upon their legs again. I became convinced that these irregular and mysterious proceedings had been taken against me

for the purpose of frightening me out of my money, and I was firmly determined that I would not be robbed in that manner.

With fretful impatience, and much inward chafing, I bore my confinement for the first two days; but gradually becoming more calm, I awaited, almost with indifference, the final solution of my affairs.

On the fourth evening of my confinement, between the unusual hours of eight and nine, my cell door was unlocked by a tall, thin, consumptive-looking turnkey, and I was ordered to come forth. I followed him into a wide hall, on each side of which were two rooms. Into one of those he ushered me, and ordered me to remain, after which he left me, closing the door behind him without locking it. It was a fine large apartment decently furnished. A plain but substantial carpet covered the floor, a clean-looking double-bed occupied the end of the room opposite the door, and against a large window, hung with faded silk curtains, stood a centre-table covered with blue cloth, on which burned an astral lamp. On the table were several books and papers, an ink-stand, and a decanter half filled with liquor, together with two or three tumblers. Several cane-bottomed chairs stood about the room in a disorderly manner, and its whole appearance indicated that it had quite lately been occupied by a party, and the recently used glasses proclaimed the fact that they had been regaling themselves.

Not wishing them to have any advantage over me in that respect, I poured some of the liquor into one of the tumblers, and, by its smell, thought it a good article of brandy; but to make sure, I "put myself outside of it," in the language of the immortal Artemus, as speedily as possible. While engaged in this, to me, then, very satisfactory occupation, the door was softly opened, and there glided into the room a tall, cadaverous gentleman, with a pair of gold spectacles on his nose. He was attired in a claw-hammer coat, vest, and pants, of seedy black broadcloth, and wore an immaculate white shirt, with a high standing collar, while around his neck was wound, in voluminous folds, a white choker. His head was bald, and he wore no beard upon his face. To judge by his bent body, pinched features, and the thin sprinkling of gray hairs which formed a ring round the lower part of his cranium, he was hunting up fifty years very fast. He approached me with a smirking face, rubbing his

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between the unusual unlocked by a tall, as ordered to come each side of which ed me, and ordered the door behind him apartment decently covered the floor, a of the room opposite with faded silk cur- blue cloth, on which e several books and lled with liquor, to- cane-bottomed chairs r, and its whole ap- been occupied by a aimed the fact that

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hands together perpetually (which, on reflection afterwards, I concluded was figuratively washing them from the clinging filth of all the disreputable businesses in which they had been engaged); he addressed me in a bland tone, with, "Good evening, my young friend! Taking a little comfort, eh? Glad to see you enjoy yourself. Be seated, pray!" I complied with his request, and patiently awaited his overtures. I was not long left in suspense; for, after a few preliminary ahems, my companion opened his batteries with, "Bad business! Bad business this, Mr. Grimes."

I looked towards the door, supposing he was addressing a new comer, when I suddenly recollected that I had given the name of Grimes to the clerk, on the night of my arrest.

"Well, I don't know, sir! It looks very pleasant here. Beg pardon, sir; but whom have I the pleasure of addressing?"

"Sedgewick, my dear young friend, of the firm of Sedgewick & Snipes, Counselors and Attorneys at Law, at your service, if you need anything in our line."

"What a singular place for a lawyer's office, Mr. Sedgewick!" I exclaimed, gazing about the room.

"Oh! my dear sir, our office is in Park Row. This beautiful room belongs to Captain Smith, but he kindly allows me to use it whenever I visit this place to aid the unfortunate."

"Who is Captain Smith?" I inquired.

"He's the chief police officer of this precinct."

"Did the Captain send you here to consult with me?"

"Oh dear, no! I merely saw your name on the books among the list of prisoners, and after examining into the charges against you, thought I could not do better than give you a call."

"Indeed, sir! You are very kind, and I am most grateful for it."

"Not at all! Not at all! Don't mention it, my dear sir. The duty of my profession is to aid the unfortunate."

"Why have they kept me here so long, without an examination?" I asked.

"Because Captain Smith, who is one of the kindest-hearted men in the world, is anxious to save you, sir! Had your case been pushed on at the present time, I'm afraid it would have gone hard with you, my dear sir!" said Mr. Sedgewick, with an ominous shake of his head.

"Why, sir, what have I done to merit so severe a fate, sir?"

"I see, my dear young friend, that you do not seem to realize the perilous position in which you stand. Let me solemnly assure you, sir, that if matters were pushed to extremities against you, six months on the Island would be the most lenient punishment you could expect!"

"You alarm me, Mr. Sedgewick! Of what am I accused, sir?"

"There are several complaints against you, sir! First, you have been keeping a gambling house—a misdemeanor which the authorities can turn into a felony, if they wish to make an example; and in such a position would you stand, were your case brought before the courts. Numerous complaints have lately been made against gaming houses, by citizens, and the attention of the public has been drawn to the subject. You are also charged with keeping a disorderly place, and with having attempted the lives of several persons there, by hiring bullies to beat, and otherwise maltreat them, while on your premises. Such an offense, my dear sir, if proven, would send you to Sing Sing."

"And you say Captain Smith does not wish me to be prosecuted?"

"He wishes to save you, sir, on account of your youth; besides, he believes you to have been the dupe of bad, designing men."

"Has he arrested any person concerned with this affair, with the exception of myself?"

"You press me too hard, my dear young friend. I cannot say, because I do not know; but if your case could be kept out of court, it would relieve all others who have been in any way connected with you. If, my dear sir, you will leave yourself in my hands, I will engage to snatch you from the clutches of the relentless law. At least the firm of Sedgewick & Snipes never yet failed to do that which they set out to do!" he added, with a low cackle.

"How can you clear me, Mr. Sedgewick?" I inquired.

"That's my secret, my young friend," he replied. "But this much I'll tell you, I must prevent your case from coming before the courts. Do you see?" he asked me, placing his forefinger alongside of his nose, while at the same moment he winked at me with his right eye.

"Then you think if my case goes before the courts I shall be severely punished?"

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"With the rod of Nemesis, my dear young sir."

"What sort of a rod is that, sir?"

"Dear me, you're not up in mythology, sir? Nemesis, my dear young friend, was the Grecian goddess of retributive justice."

"I don't want anything to do with her, sir. But can't you get me out of here, Mr. Sedgewick? I don't want to stop any longer. The soup is bad, the bread is bad, the lodging is bad, and everything about the place is bad, excepting this brandy," I added, seizing the decanter, pouring myself out another horn, and tossing it down my throat.

"I will use my best endeavors, my young friend. Nay, I *will* get you released!"

"But when, sir?"

"To-night, my dear young friend, if you follow my advice."

"All right, sir; I'm ready to go any time."

"Well, that looks something like business," he replied, with a disagreeable smirk, and for a moment pulled his fingers till he made them every one snap, and then resumed. "You see, Mr. Grimes, money can do wonders, when it is in the hands of a wise and discreet person." Stopping for a moment, he furtively regarded me.

"Yes, sir," I replied; "proceed, sir."

"Without money I could do nothing, absolutely nothing for you, Mr. Grimes."

"Certainly not, sir; but pray go on."

"Let me see," said Mr. Sedgewick, drawing towards him a sheet of paper, and picking up a pen he dipped it delicately into the ink. "Ahem," he exclaimed, as if in a deep study, and reiterating the words, "let me see," a great many times, he finally commenced muttering to himself, as he made a suppositious calculation on the paper. "He must have \$1,000." At the same time he jotted down the amount on the piece of paper before him.

"Yes, nothing less would do," he murmured, half inarticulately.

"Then there's Tibbetts," he muttered; "but I'll cut him down to \$200. Yes, I think that will do," he said, in an absent manner; then turning to me, whom he'd been furtively watching during the whole of this little by-play, he said, "My dear young friend, it will require \$1,200 to be expended on the outside, in order to get you released. Then will come in the little bill of Snipes &

Sedgewick, but we will be very moderate in our charges for managing this delicate business, my dear sir; we will put the figures down at \$300—very low, I assure you, sir. The sum required, therefore, is \$1,500, a small item, taking into consideration the dangers in which you are involved, my dear young friend."

"But I haven't got so much money!"

"Dear me! I understood you were exceedingly rich. How could you have carried on a faro-bank unless you had more than \$1,500?"

"Well, sir, I did have plenty of money, but I have lost it. My players have won from me all I had, with the exception of what was taken from me on the night of my arrest."

"Dear me! how very unfortunate. With less than \$1,500 it would be quite impossible for me to do anything for you, my dear young friend. You must appeal to your friends."

"I am a stranger, and have no friends here," I answered, doggedly.

"Dear me! and those persons who were concerned with you in the gambling-house, where are they?"

"At the time of my arrest no one was concerned there except myself. Some time ago an old fellow was with me, but he's sold out to me and gone now."

"Don't you think, my dear young friend, that we might find him?" said Sedgewick, with a sly smile.

"What! and place him in my situation?"

"By no means, my dear young friend, but to come down with the money and restore you to liberty."

"Not he. No! We quarreled when we parted, so there's no hope in that quarter, and if there were, I should never know where to find him."

"How very unfortunate. I'm sure I don't know how I can serve you unless you can get me the money."

"I have nothing more than what was taken from me on the night of my arrest in the prison here, sir," I replied.

"Dear me, how unfortunate! It would be cruelty to abandon you in your extremity of distress. No, no, we will assist you, we will assist you," he cried, grasping me warmly by the hand.

"The firm of Snipes & Sedgewick will save you, my dear young sir," and while giving me this comforting assurance he shook me energetically by the hand.

"I shall be ever most grateful, Mr. Sedgewick," I replied, returning the pressure of his snaky fingers.

"Well, then," he continued, "let me see how matters stand now," picking up from the table, where he had dropped them, his pen and slip of paper. "It is absolutely necessary we should have \$1,200 to obtain your release. After the accomplishment of that, the firm of Snipes & Sedgewick will wait for their fee, my dear young friend, until such a time as it may be convenient for you to pay it to them. Now, my dear sir, how much money have you in the office?"

"One thousand and twenty-four dollars." The amount was immediately set down on the paper before him in figures, and he inquired, "What else?"

"A gold watch, sir."

"Ah! yes; valued at how much, now?"

"It cost me \$150."

Mr. Sedgewick carefully set this down also on his paper, and inquired what other property I possessed.

"A set of faro-tools, valued at \$250, sir."

"What else?" he asked, with his eyes still on the paper before him.

"The furniture of my room, worth about \$200," I rejoined.

"According to this statement you have in money and property \$1,624," said the affable Sedgewick.

"But we couldn't sell the property at any such price as that at which I've valued it, Mr. Sedgewick."

"I'm aware of that, but you would rather keep your property, would you not?"

"Certainly, sir, if I could do so."

"Well, my dear young sir, the firm of Snipes & Sedgewick will keep your property for you, and advance sufficient money to make up the \$1,200 which you require," said Mr. Sedgewick, in his most insinuating tone, and peering at me over the tops of his glasses.

"It's very generous of you, sir!" I exclaimed.

"Don't mention it! Pray don't mention it, my esteemed young friend," said the delighted Sedgewick.

"Now, my dear young sir, as we have come to a friendly understanding, let us at once arrange this business. We must all die sometime or other, and it is customary for wise men to set



their houses in order, for 'we know neither the day nor the hour,'" quoted the pious Sedgewick, sanctimoniously raising his eyes to the ceiling, "so, as I said before, it's best to have everything in order, before that awful moment arrives which cuts us off from every hold on life." This was delivered with a doleful shake of the head. "Now, sir," he continued, "I will advance one hundred and seventy-six dollars to make up the requisite twelve hundred dollars, and to secure the firm you will transfer to it such property as you have, together with the money, etc., you have in the office, which can be effected by giving me an order for it on the clerk. And, with your permission, I'll write out the order and you can sign it, and after you have done so I will get you released inside of fifteen minutes."

I made him no reply, and he presently placed before me a slip of paper on which he had written the "order," and presented me the pen he held in his hand. "Put your signature there, my dear sir," pointing to the spot where the autograph is generally seen in such documents, and waited for me to place my name to a paper that would give to a parcel of blood-suckers what money and other property I had in the possession of the city officials. I took the offered pen, and while holding it in my fingers carefully read the instrument.

"You say that if I sign this I shall be at liberty in fifteen minutes!" I inquired, looking into his face.

"In less time, my dear young friend," answered the obsequious Sedgewick.

"But if you take everything I possess, how am I to live when released from prison, sir?"

"Liberty, my dear young sir, should be the first desire of man. Sign first, please, and you'll find afterwards that the firm of Snipes & Sedgewick will not allow one of its clients to suffer for the want of a few dollars."

"Indeed!" I said with a sneer, dashing the pen down on the floor, and rising from my chair. "The firm of Snipes & Sedgewick, and the scoundrels they are jobbing for, will find I am not quite such a fool as they seem to have imagined. No, sir! I shall not sign that paper. This is a conspiracy hatched by a gang of thieves for the purpose of robbing me, and you, you scoundrel, are doing the dirty work of the party. But you've made a grand mistake! You've failed, Mr. Sedgewick! I've no money to waste

on black-mallers; but I've plenty to pay honest lawyers to prosecute the thieves who have kept me in prison four days without a trial, in hopes to extort from me my money and other property as the price of my release, instead of at once bringing me before the Justice for examination, as it was their duty to have done."

"Dear me! dear me! how very ungrateful!" gasped Mr. Sedgewick, aghast at the totally unexpected turn affairs were taking. "I am astonished to hear such language from your lips, ungrateful boy—when I was doing my best to keep you out of State's prison, too. Dear me!"

"You had better direct your efforts nearer home, and keep yourself out, you sleek-tongued scoundrel!" I retorted.

"I'll make you repent this, you impudent-tongued puppy!" said the highly indignant and exasperated Sedgewick, leaving the room and slamming the door behind him.

Nearly an hour passed before any one entered the room. At length, the person who had brought me there entered, conducted me to my cell, and locked me up.

On the following morning, when I arose from my bed of straw, the sunbeams were brightly dancing on the stone floor of my cell. About an hour afterwards the door of my prison was unlocked and I was bidden to come forth, and was again conducted to the room where the previous evening I had enjoyed the satisfaction of seeing the redoubtable Sedgewick retire discomfited.

The only occupant of the room was the fiery-headed Lieutenant who had arrested me. He inquired after my health in a kind, but patronizing tone. "Glad to see you looking so well, Grimes; I thought you might have some appetite this morning, so I sent for you to breakfast with me."

I looked upon this fellow as the principal cause of my arrest, and also of keeping me in secret confinement with the direct purpose of robbing me. I had no proof of my suspicions, or rather presentiments, that he was the tool of Phil McGovern, who I did not for a moment doubt was the primary cause of all my troubles. The bold front I had shown to their agent, Sedgewick, had probably convinced them that they had a more troublesome customer than they had bargained for. The invitation to breakfast satisfied me that a change of policy had taken place, and that the party who held me were opening their eyes to the fact that they had on their hands a huge elephant in

the person of John Grimes. I made up my mind, however, to behave quietly, and listen to whatever my red-headed guardian should say to me.

I thanked him for his invitation, and told him I had been whetting my appetite for the last four days in order to do justice to his breakfast.

Without making me any reply, he rang a hand-bell which was upon the table, and it was answered by a big greasy looking negro.

"Breakfast for two, Snowball!"

"Y-a-a-s, sir," responded Snowball, standing as rigid as a post.

"Well, what the h—l are you standing there for?" demanded the Lieutenant.

"What's I ter fetch, sir?" responded Snowball, with a grin.

"Anything! Coffee, mutton-chops, eggs; and be damn quick about it, do ye hear?"

"So you don't like old Thompson's grub, eh?" he inquired, when Snowball had closed the door behind him.

"Who's Thompson, sir?"

"The prison cook."

"No, sir! I should have preferred to have had my meals from the outside, but I was not allowed to do so."

"You would have been, though, if you hadn't been so infernal smart with that tongue o' yourn the night you was pulled."

"Indeed! I was not aware that I had so deeply offended my jailers that they would wish to starve me in order to revenge themselves."

"Look here, Grimes, *alias* Morris, take a bit ov friendly advice, and when you get your head in the lion's mouth, draw it out as easy as ye can, or yer might git it snapt off. And while we're waiting for breakfast, I'll just take the opportunity to say I'm d—n sorry I was forced to pull you the other night, but you see as how there was several complaints made to the Cap about that there crib o' yourn, and in course he had to notice it after awhile, an' he ordered me to pull it. I oughter pulled it the night o' the big row, if only to save you from being murdered by the friends of Mooney and Delancy. How could you expect to last, an' have a 'muss' in yer crib every night? Now do you take a hint, an' git away from this burgh as fast as yer can.

Don't you be a fool! You've made enemies here that don't forget nor forgive nothin', an' they're powerful here, an' the worst set o' men in the city. I'm advisin' yer fur yer good, an' if yer don't take it, yer friends may find yer missin' some fine day."

"Then you're going to discharge me?"

"Yes, I shan't make any complaint agin yer; I didn't want ter du it, an' I've asked the Cap ter let yer go, an' he's done it."

"Who were the persons who complained against my 'crib,' as you call it?"

"We never answer such questions as them, youngster, and the least said about the matter is the soonest mended. I'll give yer your money and watch, if you promise me faithful, you'll leave the city to-day."

"What have you done with my faro-tools, and the furniture?"

"All gambling appurtenances, wherever found, are confiscated by the laws of the State."

"Not until after conviction, I believe, and then the power of confiscation lies in a Judge of one of the upper courts," I said, in an unimpassioned voice.

"Yer want to teach me the law, do yer? Now you take what's offered yer, and be damn thankful you've got off so easy."

"I'm sorry to say, Lieutenant, that I don't feel in the least thankful for your offer, nor shall I accept it. Now, let us understand each other perfectly. Your 'pulling' me, as you term it, I am perfectly satisfied was a put-up job between yourself and McGovern, because I did not choose to be black-mailed into giving him an interest into my game, where he had not put in a single cent of money. He wanted to break up my game, and have me robbed by you. You joined him, nothing loth. You have broken up my game, but you shan't rob me out of one single cent, if I can help it. You had one of your 'Shysters' here in this room last night, trying to scare me into giving him an order for my money and property. He failed, and that should have satisfied you that I am not going to suffer myself to be robbed so easily. You are anxious for me to leave the city. I am perfectly aware why you are so, and am also willing to accommodate you, because I don't like trouble, and don't care about distributing my money to lawyers, if I can get along without it. But if you keep back from me one cent's worth, which is mine, I'll spend every dollar I possess, trying to bring you

and those concerned with you, to punishment, for falsely imprisoning me! Now, will you give me my property or not?"

"I'm only here to obey the Cap's orders," he answered, gruffly, "and I can't do nothing only what he tells me to."

"Then, Lieutenant, it's entirely useless for us two to have any further conversation on this subject." I had barely finished when Snowball made his appearance with the breakfast tray on his head. In silence we ate it, although the negro was ordered from the room as soon as he had arranged it on the table. I thought my man was anxious I should resume the conversation, but I felt in no way disposed to gratify him. When he had finished his meal, he arose from the table, lit a cigar, and after giving five or six savage whiffs, he again turned to me and said, in a pompous tone, "Grimes, I did want to get you out of this scrape, as easy as possible, but you're as obstinate as a mule, and there's no use talking to you."

"Not the least, Lieutenant; I've told you what I wanted, and what I would do, and you can accept or reject it, just as you like," I said, in the same unimpassioned voice as I had all along conducted the interview.

"What the h—l do yer expect to do about it, if yer don't git yer things?" he demanded, in a voice choked with passion.

"That's my business," I replied.

"You're a d—n fool. You'd fight the police, eh? C——t! Who the h—l is going to listen to the complaints of a dirty blackleg!"

"I don't know, but I'll try and see if the police are allowed first to break into a man's premises without the warrant of a magistrate, then arrest a man, and keep him in prison day after day, without preferring any charges against him, for the purpose of robbing him of his money and valuables."

"Now look here, youngster! don't let that there tongue o' yours wag too strong. Enny more o' your sass, an' I'll send yer back to yer cell, an' leave yer there till ye're fergot!"

"I fear your threats as little as I esteem your advice," I retorted.

His red face ablaze with anger, and the gleam of hate that shone in the ruffian's eyes, showed me plainly that the villain's fingers were itching to be at my throat. But I was perfectly tranquil, and satisfied that my property would be restored to me.

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Eager as I was for revenge upon those who had broken up my business, and caused me to be imprisoned, I was perfectly aware of the obstacles I had to encounter if I tried to carry out my scheme. Any trumped-up charge might be brought on, and a dozen suborned witnesses procured, who would swear to its truth. I was fully cognizant of the dangers which stared me in the face when I declared war on the police, and was well content to leave the city and its dangers and quicksands, if I could get back my property. It was, with me, a matter of pride, that I should not let my enemies triumph over me so much as to get my money and valuables; and I verily believe, at that time, I would sooner have lost every cent I was possessed of, in the ordinary way of play, than be black-mailed out of a single dollar by these scoundrels. I well knew the McGovernites would not fail to do me an ill turn whenever it might be in their power, on account of the warm reception I had gotten up for their benefit; but their enmity I cared but very little about, but when united with the machinations of a powerful and unscrupulous police, who had already injured me, and who knew I was willing, if not able, to retaliate upon them for the wrongs which I had suffered at their hands, I was satisfied that my presence in New York city was fraught with danger to myself, and the sooner I left the place, the better.

When the Lieutenant had allowed his temper to cool down a little, he told me he should send me back to my cell until he had consulted with his Cap, as he termed him, relative to my affairs. Accordingly, a bell was rung, and I was again delivered over to my jailer, and put under lock and key. The clock was striking one as I was once more brought into the room, and the presence of the red-headed Lieutenant. "Well, Grimes!" he said, "the Cap's consented to give you all your things, provided you leave the city to-night."

"But I cannot! I must sell my furniture before I go," I said, coolly.

"How much do you want for it?"

"Two hundred dollars."

"Then I'll give you a hundred."

"No, sir! The sideboard alone cost that amount; but to facilitate matters, I'll take a hundred and fifty."

"Very well! I'll give it," and seizing a pen, he made a bill

of sale of my furniture, which he pushed over to me, and ordered me to sign it. I did so, after I had read it over carefully. He then handed me the sum agreed upon, \$150. "Now, sir, which way are you going to travel?" he inquired, with some appearance of interest.

"To Richmond," I answered.

"There's a boat leaves for Richmond at four o'clock this afternoon. I'll have a carriage to come for you in ample time."

"But there's my baggage at the hotel, and my bill there; which I must see paid," I cried.

"I'll attend to that, if you'll give me an order for your baggage."

"Several articles of my clothing are hanging round my room, and all my things are in more or less confusion. I must attend to them, and pack my trunk myself."

"You can't go!" he said, in a determined tone. "Give me an order, and I'll get all that belongs to you, every article, and have them brought to this room."

I did as he ordered me, and in something less than an hour's time my baggage, complete in every respect, arrived. When I had expressed myself satisfied, he brought me my watch and money, and after I had given him a receipt, as he desired me, he asked me if I had any more commands. I told him that, on our way to the boat, I wished to call at the Bank of North America. He promised to do so, though some distance out of our way. He then brought my kit of faro-tools, which were packed in my valise. I arranged all my belongings to my satisfaction, and then signified to my red-headed friend that I was ready to emigrate. Without making me any reply, he shook his hand-bell, and Snowball appeared in answer to the summons. Take this trunk and other baggage, and put it on the carriage at the door. When Snowball had duly performed this duty, he turned to me with a gruff "Come along." When we got to the door I saw a carriage, and my plunder stowed away round the driver's legs. "Get in!" said the Lieutenant, holding the door in his hand. I did so. He then whispered a few words to the coachman, and then followed me into the carriage; and in a moment more we were rolling over the city pavements at a rapid pace.

"Have you ordered the driver to stop at the Bank of North

America?" I inquired after we had gotten fairly under way. He nodded, laid back on his seat, and spoke not a word until we drew up before the bank.

"Here's the bank, be quick!" he said to me.

A few moments sufficed for me to draw up a check for the amount I had deposited. When I had received my money, and again entered the carriage, the Lieutenant sung out, "To the boat, Holmes!" Not another word passed the lips of either till the landing was reached. My luggage having been put aboard, I consulted my watch, and found we had at least a quarter of an hour before the steamer would leave. I made my way to the after-cabin, and, to my vexation and annoyance, I discovered my red-headed guardian still at my heels. "You don't intend to travel with me, I suppose?" I said, testily.

"No!" answered my tormentor, with the utmost calmness, "but I'll keep my eye on you till the boat starts." He took a step towards me, put his hand on the collar of my coat, and whispered in my ear, "Don't you ever come into this city again, youngster, or it won't be healthy for ye."

"Neither you nor your dirty clique own New York," I replied, defiantly, "and I will come here when I please, in spite of you."

"Will you, though?" he hissed in my ear. "If I ever catch you here, I'll send you up the river, remember that." He vanished from my side, and in a few moments we were steaming down the bay of New York. Neither of my valiant guardians, Kline or Jones, nor yet Chapin, did I ever see again since the eventful night of my arrest by the red-headed Lieutenant. Neither did I ever hear of my servant who waited on the door, and to whom I owed a few days' wages. McGovern was killed in the summer of 1857 in one of the rows between the Plug-Uglies and the Dead-Rabbits. For the relief of decent people he did not die a moment too soon.



## CHAPTER XXV.

## BOXERS.

We are indebted to England for many noble pastimes, and none stands more prominent among them than that of the prize-ring. At what period this manly sport first became fashionable among the Britishers, I am unable to say—I doubt if they can themselves—and I have never yet enjoyed the acquaintance of a single prize-fighter whose historical recollections went beyond his own first appearance in the ring, either as second or principal. That the prize-ring has been for more than three centuries a favorite sport among the English, is unquestionable. It has been patronized by the patrician and the plebeian, and those of gentle blood have frequently “shucked themselves,” and contended with the peasant for the honors of the ring. It is true that this sport has had opponents in England, as well as in this country. Strange as it may appear, men have been so insane as to declare the manly art brutal and demoralizing, and statesmen in England have at different periods endeavored to suppress it by act of Parliament; but the besotted prejudices of such old fogies were condemned, as they deserved, by the almost unanimous voice of the people. No statesman has ever made himself popular among the English by advocating the destruction of any of their national sports. Within the last thirty years the prize-ring has not only lost much of its pristine purity, but has fallen into discredit, and from the once proud position it held in the hearts of the people of Great Britain. While in London, I heard a veteran of the ring bewail the degeneracy of the times somewhat in the following strain: “Why, blarst it, when I was a lad a prize-fighter wus a nobby cove; the swells wus his pals, an’ he’d blunt by the fist-fulls. Why, when a pair o’ well matched coves went hinter trainin’ for a battle, ye’d see the nobs drivin’ to the trainin’-ground, with their tandems, hand their coaches an’ four’s, just as if they were goin’ to receive some blarsted furrin prince. Hevery day the papers would be looked hinter the first thing, ter find out in what condition the men stood, and what price they were backed at. Damn it, if ’twar a run for the Darby the bookmakin’ couldn’t be ’eavier, or more excitin’.

When the day o' battle comes, there was no sneakin' round ter git rid o' ther peelers. The noosepapers told the people where the battle would come off; 'twas a free blow to heverybody, hand them as couldn't ride would walk to the grounds, hand room wus made fur heverybody to see the sport. On the ground would be the nobility hand the gentry hin their coaches, hand hamong 'em you'd see ladies with their 'ands full o' bank-notes hand guineas, backin' their man, same as the swells. Blarst it! hit makes a man feel young again, ter think o' the good old times. None o' yer blarsted swell-mobs broke up the ring then if their coves couldn't win, none o' yer bloody duffers wus chosen fur referees; but blooded gentlemen, the first hin the land, who'd see the best man win. But look at the blarsted mills the blaggers git up now-a-days! Blarst it, they're bloody 'umbugs! The cove his matched, ha great blow his made habout it when the trainin' fur battle. The sportin' papers his squared to blow up the men an' the match; the honest patrons o' the ring his told that the ground hand the day o' battle must be kept secret, cos why? the peelers will break up the mill. Three or four nights before it's ter take place, tickets is sold fur a place hon the ground hand hin the railroad-car, hat one, two, three, or four soverings apiece. A train o' cars his 'ired to take the spectators ter the ground, hand when hit gets a mile or so outside o' Lunnon hit stops, hand they hare hinformed there's no fight, cos the peelers 'as pulled the coves. Hif they hask their blunt back, they gits a laugh for their pains. The whole thing his a bloody 'umbug from first to last. Heven the blarsted peelers his squared to pull the coves. Hif hits an honest mill hits broke hup hin a row before the bloody duffers as backs the thrashed cove will give up their blunt. No gentleman ought ter go ter one o' their blarsted mills; hif he does 'es robbed, cos hall the thieves hand pick-pockets o' Lunnon's there."

We Americans have always been a fighting people; if lead or steel has not been brought into action, the combatants have gone at each other rough-and-tumble, kick, strike, punch, bite, scratch, or gouge, all of which were considered fair. To assist in the polishing of these rough traits in our character, England has at divers times sent us over professors in the manly art of self-defense. At first, these honorable parties confined their exertions to the large cities on our seaboard. Their schools and

sparring exhibitions were liberally patronized by the English, Irish, and Scotch element in our population, and also by sailors. At first, our roughs viewed these innovations of new-fangled fighting arrangements with scorn and contempt, very much as wild animals might regard fire-arms before learning to dread them. But a rough-and-tumble bully soon discovered himself at a great disadvantage, when faced by a shoulder-hitter who could score one on his nob once a minute and coolly step out of the reach of punishment himself. What he at first despised he was now eager to seek, and the boxer became his preceptor also. But the labors of these professors were not confined to the improvement of the rowdy element. Men of respectability, wealth, and even refinement, became their pupils. In order to give a nobler tone to this science, the ring, which, until 1830, had been in the hands of sailors and the lower classes of the foreign element in the population, was brought forward for the entertainment of a more respectable, if not more enlightened class. Those who had established their fame in the prize-ring of Great Britain flocked to this country to enlighten its inhabitants in the art of self-defense. Of these gladiators the Irish were perhaps the best, and certainly the most numerous; and when two of these were matched for a mill it generally came off as quietly as a prize-fight can ever be expected to come off. But let an Irishman be pitted against a Scotchman or Englishman, and a row was pretty generally the result; invariably, if it so happened he could not hold his own against his adversary—the clannish disposition of the Irish forbidding them to see one of their countrymen lose the fight for the want of a little “heeling and tapping.” Many noted English prize-fighters have tried their fortunes against those of Irish birth, in the rings of this country, almost invariably to meet with humiliating defeat. Knowing they could expect neither friendship nor fair dealing from the Irish, they sought sympathy of the American roughs, and chose for their colors the national stars and stripes; but their adopted banner could not save them from throwing up the sponge before the green shamrock. The partisan and domineering spirit shown by the Irish at all ring-fights, where one of their countrymen was a champion, and their unmanly disposition towards foul play, had a tendency to combine against them the rough element of all other nationalities, and in this manner were created two rival factions

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in New York and Philadelphia, and to some extent in Boston. Had these rowdy partisans settled their disputes in the prize-ring, instead of in drinking-saloons and around polling-booths, the cities named would have escaped many of the bloody and disgraceful scenes which they witnessed. But it seems to have been destined otherwise; when local politics marshaled the hostile rowdy factions into their ranks, from that moment the prize-ring became a political power, and one of the established institutions of the country. These factions were Ireland and Young America in the ring. At first, in politics, Democrats and Native Americans, and when the Know Nothing banner was flung to the breeze, "Dead-Rabbits" and "Plug-Uglies." Deep and sore was the humiliation of Young America that she could not, from her own soil, produce a hero capable of maintaining her supremacy in the prize-ring. The champions of her adoption were entirely of foreign birth, and from a country which she despised and hated; even these had proven failures. The jeers of her hated foes rankled deeply in her breast. When it came to combats on the brick-bat, slung-shot, "knock-down and drag-out" principle, her champions could "whale-blaze" out of the "Micks," but in a forty foot ring they found themselves nowhere. We had a tremendous country, we had the largest lakes, swamps, and rivers, the biggest forests and tallest timber; we raised the most corn, cotton, tobacco, and pumpkins; built the best and fastest ships, and could man them with sailors able to whip all creation; we had the largest hotels and steamboats, and the largest railroads, and blew up and smashed up more people than all the world beside; we had the best military academy on earth, the finest schools and colleges, better preachers, abler statesmen, and more eloquent orators; and the Englisher always said, "you know," we had the cleverest rascals, and more of them than any country on the face of the globe. But as John Bull has always been somewhat jealous of us, any of his statements regarding us should be taken with the proverbial "grain of salt." But notwithstanding all the blessings showered upon us by an indigent Providence, we were denied a first-class bruiser to sustain our honor in the prize-ring, and like Haman of old, "all this availed as nothing while Mordecai sat at the king's gate;" and if it was intended as a punishment for our transgressions we certainly felt the infliction keenly. But at length

the days of our mourning were ended, and a champion arose whose prowess redeemed his country's fame. The hero was no whitewashed American, but one who sprung from the soil, and of an unblemished pedigree. Tom Hyer, in the spring of 1849, restored our long tarnished fame by suitably pummeling Yankee Sullivan in a forty foot ring. The latter was the victor of a dozen battles, and one of the best light-weight pugilists in the world.

American vanity claims that Burgoyne's surrender at Saratoga was one of the fifteen decisive battles of the world. Historians tell us that it brought more hope and joy to the desponding patriots than any other battle of the Revolution. It sent a thrill of exultation throughout the struggling land, which was only equaled when the electric news flashed over the wires, that the heroic Thomas had, in a battle of seventeen rounds, pounded the celebrated "Yankee Sullivan" nearly out of all semblance to humanity. The victory was regarded in the light of a new leaf added to our national laurels, by thousands who would not countenance a prize-fighter nor adorn a "mill" with their presence. It is true, it was believed by many that Sullivan "threw off" the fight, but "kickers" will be found in every country. For the first time in the annals of the country, New York city had produced a celebrity—a Hyer! who had redeemed his country, not exactly from the chains of a tyrant, but from what entitled him to certainly as much gratitude, the vile reproaches of insulting foreigners, that we were unable to produce a thorough-bred boxer on our own soil. To Young America he was the beau ideal of all that was great and noble, the finest gentleman in the land, and "could whip any d—d fur-rin scoundrel that could be imported." He became a sort of deity; but, like many of those of the fabulous ages, he lacked all the attributes. He had neither brains nor education sufficient to make him a political leader, when his popularity might have carried him. He squandered the money lavished upon him by his admirers, with a reckless hand, until he became a burden upon them, when they shook him off. He tried to replenish his revenues by terrorizing over certain gamblers of New York. Some of these for a while submitted to his extortions; but others would not give him their money, nor submit to have their games broken up, unless he was disposed to go up against lead,

or cold steel—articles held in wholesome awe, invariably, by your muscle expounder. He finally died in a state of destitution, in 1864, and was buried by the charity of his friends.

For several years before Hyer's victory over Sullivan, the prize-ring was a political power. Upon the fighter who established his reputation in the ring, were showered wealth and honors. Being too ignorant in all cases to fill any sort of office, they were usually presented by their admirers with a gorgeous drinking-saloon, which became the general resort of all rowdies of whichever faction was so fortunate as to enroll them under its banner. In this manner did the prize-fighter find "greatness thrust upon him," and became prominent as a ward politician. Aspirants for political favor sought his society, and both by flattery and bribes courted his political influence, and woe to the unlucky candidate who refused to do so, or in any manner expressed his disapprobation of the P. R.; he very shortly found himself compelled to take a back seat. The result of this was that the city offices were filled with none but the ignorant and the corrupt; men who had only the twofold object, to assist their friends politically, and to enrich themselves at the expense of the citizens. Had the two factions coalesced instead of splitting up into parties bitterly jealous of each other's power, the wealth and power of the city had been prostrate under its feet. But fortunately for the citizens, it split into two factions, and very turbulent ones. Both had their fashionable head-quarters as well as their newspapers, which kept the people at large posted up with regard to each match that was made, the course of training underwent by the respective champions, as well as their biographies, in which their virtues and the important services they had rendered to the prize-ring were duly recorded. Reporters belonging to the most respectable papers were on hand, as well as artists with their pencils, to transmit to posterity the most insignificant incident of the fight, from the building of the ring to the throwing up of the sponge. Whenever one of the illustrious lights of the P. R. died, or, as more frequently happened, was killed, the remains of the illustrious hero would be followed to its last resting place by a splendid funeral cortage, accompanied by bands of music, with muffled drums; all the gin-shops, coffee-houses, and sometimes the public buildings, were draped in black. A stranger arriving in the city, and seeing this "pomp

and circumstance," would naturally suppose that the nation mourned one of her most illustrious and honored sons.

The Mexican war afforded some slight relief to the cities of New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and New Orleans, by freeing them of some of their rowdies. Boston sent out to Mexico one regiment of her roughs, Philadelphia two, while New York sent one to join the army under General Scott, and another to California. New Orleans sent two six months regiments, but they were disbanded after a two months' residence in the swamps of the Rio Grande, with the exception of those among them whose bones were laid there by disease. On the whole, not more than one-half of those sent out ever returned to their homes; the remainder either having been killed in battle, or died from diseases peculiar to the country. The next drain upon the "rough" element in our large cities, was the California excitement; but with the growth of these cities, particularly New York and Philadelphia, increased the rowdy element, which, until the commencement of our civil war, held the political power. That event not only greatly thinned out those gentry, but almost entirely destroyed their ruffianly rule. New Orleans sent at least fifteen hundred of the worst hell-hounds that ever disgraced humanity, to the Confederate armies in Virginia and Arkansas; and Louisville sent as many as five hundred of her Plug-Ugliers to fight for the Confederacy, and Baltimore furnished more than one thousand; but these last, instead of seizing their muskets and "dying in the last ditch," became spies and informers. On the first call "to arms," Philadelphia sent five or six regiments of roughs down into Virginia; those among them who escaped the ravages of disease, and the battle, returned home after being mustered out of a three years' service, and could never be induced to enlist afterwards. Since their return they vote the Democratic ticket to a man, which enables them to almost control the city government. When the news of the bombardment of Fort Sumter reached New York, the rowdy element, boiling over with patriotism, formed themselves into several regiments, some of which were officered with shining lights of the P. R. Officers and men left the city with the idea that they were going to "chaw up" the "secesh," body and bones; but if any among them ever returned from the front, covered with the glory of heroic deeds, the recording scribes of



the war have either been too prejudiced to do them justice, or have forgotten it entirely. A regiment of these coves, calling themselves the "Fire Zouaves," who had blown their trumpets remarkably loud, and threatened the Southrons with a doom as sanguinary as the color of their own breeches, were brought into action for the first time at the battle of Bull Run. They only waited to hear one volley from the guns of the "seceshers," but threw down their muskets and started for Washington, a distance of nearly thirty miles, and never stopped until they reached it; on the principle, doubtless, that

"He who fights and runs away  
May live to fight another day;  
But he who is in battle slain  
Can never hope to fight again."

Since the last terrible uprising of the roughs, in the summer of 1863, which is still fresh in the minds of all, these gentry have learned that it is not wise for them to indulge in such demonstrations, and have been kept in pretty good subjection.

Plug-Uglyism, Dead-Rabbitism, and Thuggery, have passed away with the days in which they flourished, but the material of which they were composed still remains, though now held in salutary check by a well-disciplined police force, backed by the bayonets of the military. The rowdy element still flourishes, and is still a power in the cities of New York and Philadelphia, and a united one. In these cities, the commission of brutal murders by election roughs is of almost daily occurrence in times of excitement, and the perpetrators walk abroad in open day, fearlessly, as it is seldom one is punished for his atrocious conduct. Bands of organized thieves are continually committing their depredations on the community, and are either allowed to go "scot free," or, if arrested, to purchase their freedom, or in some way escape the punishment they so richly deserve; because, to a man, on election days, they work to elevate their chosen friends to office. The detectives "stand in" with the thieves. Justice is administered by an unscrupulous set of men, whose decisions are often more in accordance with their feelings, and those of their friends, than strict justice; consequently the laws are enforced only against obscure or friendless persons. Let any unfortunate render himself obnoxious to any of the prominent politicians of New York, a charge is trumped up against



him, and villains are suborned to swear away his liberty, or perhaps even his life. None who have read "Monte Christo," I think, could fail to shudder at the horrible villainy which consigned Edmond Dantes to the Chateau D'If, and felt relieved to think the whole terrible tale was but the creation of a fertile brain. Reader, men innocent of every crime have been placed at the bar of justice in New York city, and their liberty sworn away by villains hired for that purpose. Such acts are no secret to hundreds of people in the city, many among them being practicing lawyers, well versed in all the cunning artifices used at the criminal bar—men who are considered highly respectable, occupy pews in prominent churches, and outwardly strictly observe all the religious duties of their creed; like the Jews of old, they keep the outside of the platter clean, but within, "all is rottenness and dead men's bones." Why should they raise their voice in behalf of some poor, wronged, obscure wretch, who can bring them no glory, and has not even a cent to pay them? Why should they draw upon themselves the enmity of a powerful political clique, only for the sake of seeing justice done, and gain nothing material by it either?

But why should any one desire to send an innocent man to State's prison? Just so; but why are some people so anxious sometimes to send a rich relative to the lunatic asylum? Because they have something to gain by it. Policy, gain, revenge, or lust, are generally the whips with which the devil scourges on mankind to the commission of such deeds.

A person knowing more than might be desirable of the affairs, or perhaps the previous life of some powerful individual, high in authority, might some day ventilate his knowledge, possibly before a court of justice; but if his wisdom is railroaded to State's prison, his evidence becomes harmless. A poor, but ambitious young fellow may become popular in the ward where he lives. Such rising eaglets are, if recalcitrant, always objects of inquietude to the reigning political favorite, who thinks the sooner their wings are clipped, the better. The Thugs of New Orleans would have handed such as these over to the assassins; but these little affairs are managed in a more humane manner by the political powers of New York city. With the assistance of a pliable judge, a clever lawyer, and three or four suborned witnesses, he is ticketed and handed over to the keepers of

Sing Sing for a few years. Love, or rather lust, has sometimes had something to do with this extraordinary railroading. A handsome wife, sister, or daughter, may be a desired object, and their honor may be protected as far as in them lies by a husband, father, or brothers. Should these prove troublesome, and love honor better than money, the easiest way, perhaps, of removing them out of the path of the seducer, is to railroad them into the State's prison; not a difficult task, if the *modus-operandi* be well understood. Witness the following extract from the *Herald*, (New York), Dec. 23rd, 1869:

#### A WAIF FROM THE ORIENT.

On the application of Mr. David B. Phillip, a writ of *habeas corpus* was granted yesterday, by Judge Troy, of Brooklyn, in the case of Miss Hentus Harootuma, who had been sent to the penitentiary for the term of two months, by Justice Lynch, on a charge of malicious trespass. The lady, who is a native of Turkey, finely educated, and highly accomplished, is about twenty-five years of age, and very prepossessing, was brought into the Court of Sessions yesterday, when Mr. A. Bedrosiara, who appeared on behalf of Mr. C. C. Oscanyan, the Turkish Consul, acted as her interpreter, and stated her case to the Court. From her story, it would appear that she was the victim of the most despicable outrage. A year or so ago, she says, a man named C. H. Christian, a confectioner on Fulton Avenue, Brooklyn, formed her acquaintance in Turkey, and induced her to elope with him to this country. She had considerable money at the time, amounting to within something like four hundred pounds sterling, and on his promising to make her his wife as soon as they arrived in this country, she gave him her money, and consented to elope with him from her home, and followed him to America. On reaching this country, Christian established a confectionery store, with the money he had obtained, but refused to marry her, and recently, when she asked him for some money, acted in a very violent manner towards her. On the 5th inst. he had her arrested, taken before Justice Lynch, and sent to Raymond Street Jail for ten days. On the day of her release she again returned to the house of her betrayer, and rung the door-bell. Christian appeared at the door, she says,

and ordered her away. Having no other home, and not knowing where to go, she refused to leave the house, when he again caused her arrest. On this occasion he made a charge of trespass, and, at *his solicitation*, the Justice sent her to the Kings County Penitentiary at Flatbush for two months. The attention of the Turkish Consul was called to the case, and through him the unfortunate woman was liberated from prison. Judge Troy looked upon her case as one deserving a great deal of sympathy, and called the attention of the District Attorney to it, as one it would be just and proper to submit to the grand jury. He said he had in several instances been compelled to release parties sent to prison by Justices, where no proper complaint had been made, and he thought it time, now, that the attention of the grand jury was called to it. The lady was promptly discharged.

Respectability makes a charge of trespass against Obscurity, and *solicits* Justice to send obnoxious Obscurity to prison for two months. The obsequious Justice grants the request of *voting* Respectability. Humanity steps in and takes Obscurity before a higher tribunal, which at once decides that the prisoner has been deprived of her liberty without sufficient cause, and orders her to be released. The Justice also informs the District Attorney that this is by no means the first instance in which he has been compelled to release parties from prison where no proper and sufficient complaint was made against them. There's justice for you! in the land of the free and the home of the brave! where the "star-spangled banner," flaunting to the breeze, invites the down-trodden and oppressed, from the four quarters of the globe, to come and take shelter under its broadegis, promising all equal rights before the law. What a mockery!

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What a mockery!

## CHAPTER XXVI.

## PERSECUTION.

Up to the commencement of the civil war few gamblers have been so fortunate as to escape being preyed upon in some manner by desperadoes, rowdies, black-mailers, or rascally officials, reckless assassins, and rowdies. These worthies in the Southern and Border States and territories would not coolly "bonnet" a dealer and deprive him of his bank, in that freebooter style so much in vogue among the rowdies of the North. In the land of chivalry the rights of property were generally too highly respected to tolerate such bare-faced robberies; but in some sections, where armed violence had full sway, it might not be safe, at times, for a strange gambler to put down his money on a table.

What gamblers principally had to dread from Southern and Border State ruffians was having their games broken up by violence, their valuable patrons driven from their banks in consequence of their bets being stolen from the lay-out, or gross abuse, if not violent assault from some desperate ruffian, because unwilling to hand over to him their money at his mere request. The gambler was sometimes not only forced to witness such outrages on his players, without power to protect them, but that he might be allowed to carry on his business was often compelled to disgorge to the ruffians forced loans. They frequently, too, chose his crowded room as the arena where they settled their feuds; pulling out their pistols and banging away at each other with the greatest imaginable looseness, and the most supreme disregard for the safety of the other inmates; or perhaps while the business of the house was in full blast a band of these ruffians would enter and amuse themselves by shooting out the lights, and otherwise terrifying and molesting the patrons until they had dispersed them.

Peaceable citizens would naturally be deterred from visiting a place where such scenes were constantly transpiring, and the efforts of the owner to protect his game, had he the temerity to make any, would place his life in constant jeopardy.

In New York and Philadelphia, and many other Northern cities, the gambler having the temerity to open his bank without

securing the protection of some rowdy leader, was almost sure to be robbed. Should he set up his bank on Ann street, the Bowery, Chatham, or Barclay Streets, and all persons be privileged to play at it, he might count himself fortunate if one day's grace was allowed him without having a blanket twisted over his head and his person relieved of whatever valuables he carried upon it. Should his ambition soar above such mediocre places, and induce him to fit up a respectable room and open a bank in it for select players only, the rowdies would make a descent on him, break down his door, run all the players out of the place, and steal everything they could lay hands on, and whatever they could not carry off they maliciously destroyed. While strangers were suffering all the indignities described, a dozen or more banks in the city carried on their business without fear of molestation. Their dealers were neither "bonneted" nor robbed, nor in any respect disturbed at their business. The police nor the rowdies dared raid them, because they were under the protection of the rowdy chiefs.

Many gamblers are still living who remember the establishment at No. 10 Ann Street, the famous "Tapis Franc." The front room, which was on the ground floor, contained a bar, on the English ale-house plan. Immediately behind this was another long narrow room, where various games of chance were played, such as chuck, roulette, twenty-one, and faro. The patrons of this house were from almost every grade of society—merchants, bankers and lawyers, came here to solace their leisure hours by a combat with the "tiger," as well as city politicians of every grade, from the alderman to the pot-house spouter. Garroters, pickpockets, and slavers frequented the place—all were welcome, so long as they came with money in their hands. The ill-gotten gains of the footpad were as welcome to the proprietors of the "Tapis Franc" as the revenue of the millionaire, provided one bet as freely as the other. But if any of the roughs frequenting the house conceived the idea that they could grab any of the banks by "bonneting" the dealers, or breaking up by violence the games, they soon received strong demonstration of their error, for the proprietors were complete masters of the logic of the "knock-down and drag-out" argument, and if overpowered by numbers, or any way over-matched, a single cry of "Police!" brought a detachment of blue-coated city guardians to the rescue.

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No. 98 Barclay Street was another resort of the roughs to play at faro. The banks here were generally snaps, and the company of the most abandoned and turbulent description. But they would not rob each other of their bank money; the old adage which enjoins "honor among thieves" was in force to that extent among them. A captain of police would as soon take his men into the heart of the Comanche nation, when all the warriors were on the "war-path" to avenge some injury done them by the whites, and attempt to capture their chief, as to enter 98 Barclay Street and arrest one of its patrons. No gambler having any respect for his money, if knowing the character of the place, would dream of opening a bank there, though there was plenty of money among the crowd who frequented it. It is related that eight dealers were successively blanketed and robbed there of their money and other valuables.

At that time it was simply impossible for any gambler to conduct a game in New York city, without the countenance and protection of some rowdy leader. Gamblers have repeatedly arrived here, from the East, South, and West, bringing with them plenty of funds, and invested them in fitting up houses, where they desired to entertain a less dangerous and objectionable class of customers, and to do so in a more agreeable and refined manner than they had previously been received in such places; but the moment the roughs learned that they were to be excluded, they burst open the doors, rushed in upon the parties, and stole or destroyed everything of the slightest value they could lay their hands on. During these raids, the proprietors and their patrons might consider themselves indeed fortunate, did they escape to the street with unbroken bones and a whole skin. On the day following one of these raids, a leading rough would call on the despoiled gambler, and condole with him on the rough usage he had received, and advise him to give his friend "Larry Reilly," or some other Hibernian appellation equally euphonious, an interest in his game. "A d—n dacent fellow. None o' the blaggards 'll come snakin' round where Larry is. They've tasted his mutton too often for that, an be the same token he's a gintleman ivery inch av 'im sure; he knows all the valuable players here, an' they like him too. Take him in wid ye's; he'll make yer fortin fur ye."

The gambler, having already gone to considerable expense,

feels that he cannot afford to abandon the enterprise, if he can procure protection enough to secure him against such raids in future, so he consents to give "the decent man, Larry Reilly," an interest in his game, without his risking a single cent in it himself. Larry, who belongs to a political ring, has gained his point. 'Twas he put up the job to have the house raided, succeeded, and is now duly installed as one of its proprietors and its protector. He has probably just sufficient knowledge of gambling to play a game of euchre or romps for "drinks all round" in some rum-mill; but among the roughs he is all-powerful, and when he "opes his lips no dog must bark." Let him but raise his finger, and the most turbulent among them is reduced to instant obedience. Should any person try to black-mail the house during his connection with it, he will get his head "maimed" for his pains.

About the time of the breaking out of our civil war, the roughs of New York were beginning to learn that even a gambling-house was entitled to legal protection. A Mr. William Mulligan, duelist, desperado, boxer and bruiser, the hero of three duels, half a dozen street fights, and ring and bar-room fights innumerable, being expatriated from California by the Vigilance Committee of San Francisco, found, after an absence of many years, "his foot upon his native heath" in the city of New York. Whether muscle, steel, or lead, were brought into play, Billy Mulligan was found to be rather an unpleasant customer to stagger up against. On his arrival in New York, he was received with open arms and demonstrations of much joy, by the great unwashed; and why not? Was he not the hero of fifty battles—the victor on many a hard-fought field—a leader of political rowdyism in California—a bold and fearler expounder of its opinions? and was he not at that moment a martyr to the cause? Favors and money were showered on the redoubtable Billy, by his admirers, nor did it for a moment cross his mind that he was violating any moral or social duty in accepting everything that was offered him. He had a strong appreciation of the luxuries and pleasures of life, and among other things was prone to enter into tussles with the tiger, in which that deceptive animal pretty generally came off the victor. Few things in life dulls the enthusiasm of friends so quickly as the borrowing of money and neglecting to pay it. Mulligan's admirers began



to make up their minds that he was too expensive a luxury to be extensively indulged in, consequently withdrew themselves in a great measure from his society. His popularity was on the wane. Those whom he owed, to escape lending him more, avoided him. Keepers of gambling-houses had loaned him money from a sense of fear, in order to deter him from creating a disturbance in their houses; and when his sources of revenue from the outside were diminished, he confined his predatory onslaughts to their customers, whom they had to stand calmly by and see mulcted in forced loans, without daring to make the slightest remonstrance. The redoubtable Billy, meeting one of his acquaintances before a faro-table with five or six hundred dollars' worth of chips, would demand a loan of one or two hundred dollars' worth of them, which was pretty generally granted by the player, sooner than expose himself to his enmity, which he would surely gain, should he refuse; not to mention, as often happened, abuse and brutal violence. This man finally became so obnoxious to faro-players, that his appearance in a gambling-house was sufficient to cause the players to pass in their checks, get the money for them, and precipitately leave the place.

The career of Mr. Mulligan was finally brought to an abrupt close, by one of those redoubtable guardians of gambling-houses, described in a former chapter, and who was as well a prominent ward politician. In the establishment 676 Broadway, where this chief reigned, Mr. Mulligan had exploited in his usual engaging manner several times, and was finally plainly informed by its guardian that they did not keep a loan-office, and would no longer submit to have their patrons driven away in consequence of his practices upon them. When a bully falters, he is lost. Mulligan retorted upon the chief with some choice language peculiar to his tongue, which, by the way, was as potent in its sphere as his muscular arms and sledge-hammer fists were in theirs. That worthy retorted upon Mulligan by stepping to the door, calling a policeman, and desiring him to take that gentleman out of the house; but he prevented the officer from executing the order, by presenting at his head a loaded pistol. He ran to the door and rapped for assistance, and Mr. Mulligan was ingloriously marched to the lock-up. His case was sent before the criminal court; but in the meantime he procured bail, and although repeatedly advised to forfeit it by his sureties, he obsti-



nately refused to do so, thinking, no doubt, that none would dare punish so important a personage as Billy Mulligan. The trial came off and he was sentenced to four years in Sing Sing at hard labor. It was at the time, and has ever since been the prevailing opinion, that Mulligan's conviction was the result of a conspiracy; and what gives color to the supposition is the fact that, after being incarcerated for eight months, he was released on a writ of error. His turbulent and domineering spirits had aroused against him a host of enemies, among whom were many powerful men, who were only too glad of an opportunity to wreak their revenge upon him, when he had placed himself within the meshes of the law, and there is very little doubt that he owed his conviction to one of those plots so well known to the legal practitioners of New York, for getting rid of an obnoxious person by railroading him into State's prison.

But the conviction of Mulligan had a very salutary effect on the rowdy element of New York, and showed them that they could not break down the doors of a gambling-house, rob, and otherwise maltreat the inmates, and walk off scot-free without danger of punishment from the law. It also taught the proprietors that it was their right to call a policeman to remove from their premises any person who was disorderly, or otherwise making himself a nuisance to the other inmates, without the penalty of being called upon to answer before a police justice, for the character of their establishments. From the time of Mulligan's arrest, the roughs of New York ceased their raids on gambling-houses, and their proprietors can now shut their doors against rowdies, ruffians, dead-beats, shysters, and check-charmers, without the least apprehensions on the score of violence.

Philadelphia has for more than thirty years been under the control of the rowdy element, and during that time no gambler dare set up his bank there, unless he first propitiate the favor and secure the protection of some political rowdy leader. Should he, as many before him have done, try to do so, he will become the prey of every black-maller and extortionist of like feather in the city, and their name is legion. Men will be staked to play at his game; should they win, all right; but should they lose, they will sue back for five times the amount dropped against the bank. They will drop money on his game, or take any other despicable

advantage, and should he chance to be a person who will stand no such nonsense, and offers to make any resistance, no matter how slight, they will break up his game, and pitch himself and gambling paraphernalia out of the window. A rough place on strange faro-dealers is Philadelphia. Should one have the temerity to apply to a magistrate for redress or protection, he will be immediately consigned to the Moyamensing prison for twelve months, by the outraged majesty of the law, for dealing faro.

The resident gamblers of the place all spring from and belong to the rowdy element, and are of the most despicable order, and so cowardly that a faro-bank of a \$50 limit is frequently banked by a dozen of them. They are constantly wrangling among themselves, and meanly jealous of each other's success; but let a strange gambler arrive in the place and open a bank, they will unite almost to a man, to rob him, and should they fail in accomplishing their purpose, will employ roughs to break up his game, and if he has not secured the favor and protection of one of the rowdy leaders, he is fortunate indeed if he escapes from the place with a dollar in his pocket, or an unbroken bone in his skin. In order to obtain this protection, he must give up at least ten per cent. of his game; many strange gamblers have, at various times, secured this protection, and been free, in consequence, from descents from the ruffians and the extortionists and black-mailers who follow in their train. Such skinning-houses as exist there, both first and second class, are under the special protection of the rowdy leaders, and are mulcted in ten or twenty per cent. of their profits, as the price of such shelter. Several Judges and District Attorneys have at various times tried to break up all the gambling-houses in the city, but have invariably found, in the end, that the rowdy element was too strong for them.

No class, on an average, has produced braver men, or more of them in proportion to its number, than the gambling community; still, as all its members are by no means so, and where one is daring, ten are mild and peaceable, and as it often happens the bravest cannot protect themselves, in such cases they must rely on the expedients devised by a fertile brain for protection. The gambler, in days now gone by, was compelled to have a protector, and it often happened now was more efficient or more useful than the man who had killed one or more persons in

a street fight or duel, or had established his reputation in a forty-foot ring, or the chivalrous individual who had covered himself with glory by brass-knuckling a score or so of persons at an election row, or a bar-room fight; or the western gentleman, who had won for himself a deathless name by "gouging out" a dozen or so of eyes during his various frolics, not to mention biting off of a few ears and noses in the overflow of his spirits. In fact, killers, bruisers, and boxers were made serviceable as guardians, in many places, previous to the inaugurating of our present admirable system of police. In those days many of our young bloods were everywhere attended by some noted bully or desperado, as a protection. Theatres, circuses, and public balls, had their bullies in attendance, to preserve order, and one of these was in such cases found more serviceable than half a dozen of the police of that time. The presence of the latter, in fact, was often an object of attack for a party of young rowdies, but the appearance on the scene, of a noted desperado or bully, would strike a wholesome terror to the hearts of such lawless characters.

As the gambler could get no protection from the law, he was bound to provide himself with the next best thing obtainable, and was consequently obliged to fall back on the desperado or rowdy. While dealing his game upon race-courses, or at fairs, as well as many other places where there were public gatherings, also in localities where law and police were myths, no gambler could carry on his game unless protected by some desperado, who was respected by the thieves and rowdies, and who inspired in their minds a desire to keep a safe distance between his "bunch of fives" and their persons. As these latter-named classes feared a first-class bruiser more than any emissary of the law, supposing such an one at hand, the gamblers fell back upon such characters for support and protection. In those lawless regions, and in those semi-civilized days, it was customary for itinerant gamblers to have traveling always with them some noted bruiser or pugilist, and the custom was not entirely abandoned until since the closing of our civil war.

I have mentioned that the law offered no protection whatever to the gambler; in fact, in many places the officers of the law were his most persistent and bitter enemies. They viewed every gambler who set up his game in their midst, as a fat sub-

ject to be plucked by them, without the slightest compunctions of conscience, or any fear of condemnation from the community or censure from the public generally. The very laws which had been framed in many of the States, to prevent gambling, were used by the rascally officials to black-mail gamblers. For instance: In Texas, where the fines for dealing banking-games range from \$25 to \$100, the amount to be fixed by the discretion of the courts, in proportion to the enormity of the offense, the District Attorney accumulates against a gambler as many indictments as he possibly can, and then offers to quash them for a certain sum of money. This cash, it is unnecessary to say, he pockets. In precisely the same manner does the District Attorney of Kentucky operate against gamblers who have infringed the gambling laws of the State, which provide that, for dealing any banking-game of chance, the person so doing shall be fined for each and every offense, \$500, no more nor no less. Half this sum goes into the pocket of the informer, \$125 to the school-fund, and \$125 to the prosecuting attorney. But these gentry have generally looked sharply after their own pockets, and carried on their own "little game" under the rose. It was no uncommon thing for a District Attorney to permit a gambler to open and run a faro-bank, and to suffer none to molest him, and when he was about to quit the place, pass in to him his little bill, drawn up in accordance with the sum which the bank had won since playing in the town. If it had won nothing, his bill for non-intervention would be \$125. Should he be informed that the bank had won \$2000, his demand against the banker would probably reach as high as \$500. The latter *could*, if he desired, leave the place before a bill had been found against him by the grand jury, but should he ever venture again within the limits of the State, the District Attorney would make him pay his little bill, or leave him in jail at two dollars per day, until the amount of his fine had been paid. This wretched clause was, in 1862, expunged from the law, and those portions of the fines formerly given to the informer, now reverted to the State. But the Attorney's fine still stands, and the cases are few indeed, where a gambler is allowed to slip away from a place until he has "planked down the dust" required by this gentleman. The present District Attorney of Louisville realizes yearly from \$12,000 to \$15,000 from gambling-houses in that

city. Each house is taxed by him according to the money it makes, or is by him supposed to make. This is accomplished by collecting a certain number of indictments against each house, then sending separately for the proprietors, and presenting them with his bill. After considerable haggling, the man of law and the gambler agree upon a price, which gives to the latter another year's respite.

In New York, the District Attorneys had to depend on terrorism, in order to extract money from the gamblers. Two laws were on the statute books, and recognized in the State. The oldest was a fine of \$50 for playing or dealing any banking game of chance, and subsequently, in 1851, a law was enacted, making the dealing of any such game a felony, punishable by a rustication of five years in the State's prison. This law, though it could not be enforced, juries refusing to convict under it, admirably answered the purposes of black-mailing lawyers. Whenever a gambler, having strong political influence, was tried for dealing a game of chance, he was usually convicted under the old law, which in such cases made and provided that he should be fined \$50. But should the culprit be a stranger, or a person of little or no influence, and a fat subject for plucking, they were forced to disgorge under the new law, which threatened them with the State's prison. This was generally accomplished by protracting the period of their trial, keeping it over from one term to another, and from court to court, until the victim was satisfied to pay several hundreds, in order to close up the vexatious business, and be rid at once of his anxiety and suspense. About ten years since, a few gamblers of New York city forced the courts to decide under which of these laws gamblers must be convicted. This was done by several gamblers who were indicted in different courts, standing their trials, and being all convicted under the \$50 fine law, thus establishing a precedent. But I need scarcely inform the reader that those heroic gentlemen, who sacrificed themselves to test the sovereignty of the two laws, were made aware of the fate which awaited them, before the coming off of their trials. But if a few District Attorneys may be found unscrupulous enough to black-mail gamblers by perverting the laws of the State, happily, there are many who are much too high-minded to descend to such unworthy artifices in order to enrich themselves.

Most of these gentlemen, especially in our large cities, leave the gamblers entirely unmolested, and the howls raised against them on that account, by some of the ultra moral press, are unjust, because a jury could scarcely be empaneled who would convict under the harsh laws on the statute books of some of the States. In two of our large cities, Baltimore and New Orleans, gambling is regulated by the police department, but is never interfered with, because they levy on each house a certain tax for the support of their political power. In Chicago and St. Louis the gambling-houses are raided at the caprice of the Chiefs of Police, and their gambling paraphernalia confiscated. In neither of those States is there any law to justify such high-handed proceedings, except the law of might. Repeatedly have all the square gambling-houses of Chicago been closed by the so-called "authority" of the Chief of Police, while as man, as two or three skinning-houses carried on their business full blast, having liberally "palmed" that worthy for his grace towards them, while the "square" houses, being unable to act in like manner, were closed. Between the years 1856 and 1859, four sharpers were allowed to keep open their gorgeous establishment, to the exclusion of all others. George Trussell, one of the partners in this firm, was a shrewd, cunning Yankee from Vermont, and a member of the secret police. Every gambler setting up a game in the city, he had arrested, imprisoned, and mulcted in heavy fines, besides causing their gambling tools to be confiscated. This fellow had full sway over the gambling privilege of the city, which his compeers and himself turned into a stealing privilege, for which they feed the accommodating police most munificently. The career of this worthy was finally brought to an abrupt close by a pistol in the hands of his mistress. The woman, of whom he had begun to tire, sent for him to come to her; he refused to do so, sending back by the messenger, who was the trainer of the trotting horse Dexter, of which he was part owner, an insulting message. The woman, who was partially drunk, entered a carriage and was driven to a drinking-saloon, where she knew Trussell was, and again sent in the messenger, whom she had retained with her. He replied by an oath. The messenger then tried to dissuade her from trying further, and to induce her to return home. She would not listen, but got down from the carriage, and, without saying

another word, fired three shots at him from a revolver, which all took effect. He died in a few moments. When the woman found she had killed him, she gave way to the most frantic grief and ravings. She was arrested, tried, and, on account of extenuating circumstances, received a very light sentence, one year in the penitentiary, I believe. At her discharge, she left Chicago and went to California.

After the death of Trussell, the power of the sharpers waned, and square faro-banks were once more opened in the city. But should one of them neglect the ceremony of roundly palming the Chief of Police, or should his agents fail in obtaining for him an interest in some well-to-do game, he is immediately seized, suddenly, with a virtuous zeal to put down gambling in the good city of Chicago, by the closing of all gaming establishments, (*nota bene*, who do not pay tribute to him). This mode of proceeding was for a long time fashionable in many of our other larger cities. A Police Captain, if not satisfactorily "palmed," would make a descent on a gambling establishment, seize all its inmates and the gaming appurtenances, and take them to the lock-up, for no other purpose than to administer to the parties a healthy scare, and a lesson to all the gamblers in the vicinity of the raided establishment, and let them know they could not carry on their games without their connivance and assistance. But this agreeable style of doing things has been broken up to a great extent by honest Judges, who would not concede that a police officer had a right to enter a gambling-house without the warrant of a magistrate. These kind of Judges had, on several occasions, to rebuke their officers for their unlawful descents upon gambling-houses, before they could succeed in putting a stop to such high-handed proceedings in New York. Such a thing has never happened in Boston, since the redoubtable Marshal Tukey, about thirty years ago, made such a descent, and captured all the inmates, some forty in all, whom he handcuffed, and marched in pairs to the lock-up. New England, with all her sins on the head of ultra Puritanism, has persecuted gamblers less than any other States in the Union, if we may except the single one of Arkansas.

Of the many cunning devices put into execution by officers of the law, in order to extract money from gamblers, the following, which happened in Louisville, Kentucky, between the years 1856



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## PERSECUTION.

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and 1858, caps the climax. Brewster and Gilmore, two de-  
tectives of that city, saw in the gambling laws, if properly  
manipulated, a small fortune for themselves; but in order to  
avail themselves of all the advantages connected therewith, it  
was necessary that a magistrate should "stand in" with them, in  
their plans. This individual was found, in the person of the  
County Judge. This worthy dignitary, on the oaths of the de-  
tectives mentioned, would issue warrants of arrest for such as  
were running games within his jurisdiction. Armed with these,  
Brewster and Gilmore would seize their victims and drag them  
to prison. The arrested gambler might certainly give security  
and stand his trial, but it would not better his condition. Con-  
viction was certain to follow, with a fine of \$500, which must be  
paid by the culprit, or worn out in the county jail at \$2.00 per  
day.

The gambler, on his arrest, was informed by his worthy cap-  
tors, that, on the payment of \$500, he was at liberty to seek fresh  
fields and pastures new, and it is needless to add that not one  
in five hundred refused the generous offer. Brewster and his  
"pal" soon closed every faro-room in Louisville; but, strange to  
say, during the whole time they were so virtuously following up,  
and driving from their midst, every gambler who dared open a  
game in the city, an aristocratic skinning-house flourished with-  
out let or hindrance.

Strange gamblers, coming to Louisville, and stopping at the  
Galt House, were allowed by Mr. Raines, at that time its  
proprietor, and a warm friend to gamblers, to set up their games  
in their sleeping-rooms. Within these hallowed precincts the  
feet of Mr. Brewster, and his "pal," Gilmore, could not penetrate;  
much to their disgust and chagrin. But they set their brains to  
work, and finally hit upon a plan which answered their purpose  
just as well. Citizens of the place, who were known votaries of  
play, were invited to these banks, though none except those of  
unquestionable integrity, and in whose honor and secrecy the  
most implicit trust could be placed. Whenever one of these  
transient banks was playing in the house, Mr. Raines never  
allowed any of the servants to wait on that room, except his own  
favorite boy, in whom he placed the utmost trust and confidence.  
For some time Brewster and his "pal" were at fault, but not  
long. The patrons of the game, returning home from the Galt



House, were arrested on the street, dragged before a magistrate, and forced, under oath, to betray the names of those they had played against. On the strength of this forced evidence, warrants were issued for the arrest of the gamblers, and they were forced to hand over to their persecutors the requisite \$500. For something like eighteen months these secret arrests were repeated at intervals, until the respectable votaries of the game began to look on each other with distrust and suspicion. Meanwhile, about fifty gamblers had been arrested, and forced to disgorge five hundred apiece. It was evident that there was, somewhere in their midst, a traitor, who, having recourse to the rooms during the hours of play, was secretly giving information to the detectives. But no suspicion fell on the real culprit, and probably his guilt would never have become known to those who trusted him so entirely, had it not been that Brewster could not resist an opportunity of venting his spleen on John Raines, and showing him how cunningly he had outwitted him. Raines had forbidden him entrance to the hotel, since he arrested gamblers there, which so exasperated that worthy, that, in order to revenge himself, he betrayed the poor slave who had trusted to his honor. The disclosure was not made, however, until the County Judge mentioned had retired from office, his term having expired, and the man who filled his place refused to issue warrants for arrests of gamblers, unless on the voluntary complaint of a citizen; and this decision had destroyed the "little game" of Gilmore and his companion, and being no longer able to avail themselves of the perfidy of Raines' boy, they did not for an instant hesitate to expose him, for the sake of a petty revenge. The unfortunate slave, whom they had betrayed after serving them so well, received a hundred lashes from his master, and was afterwards sold to a cotton planter in the South.

d before a magistrate, ones of those they had forced evidence, warblers, and they were the requisite \$500. For secret arrests were revotaries of the game and suspicion. Mean-while, arrested, and forced to admit that there was, having recourse to the truth giving information on the real culprit, and he known to those who at Brewster could not on John Raines, and let him. Raines had he arrested gamblers any, that, in order to one who had trusted to me, however, until the office, his term having place refused to issue on the voluntary com- and destroyed the "little d being no longer able mes' boy, they did not or the sake of a petty they had betrayed after ashes from his master, or in the South.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

## PREJUDICES.

"Have you heerd ther noos, Missus Jones?" inquired a neighbor of an old lady seated in her door-way enjoying her pipe, her "darter" being engaged hanging clothes to dry in the back yard.

"No, I haint," she replied, taking her pipe from her mouth, and earnestly regarding the speaker; "I haint heerd nothing; what is it, Mister Rush?"

"A pesky lot o' gamblers ev got inter town!" replied Mr. Rush.

"Goodness gracious!" exclaimed the old lady, springing to her feet, and screaming to her "darter" at the top of her voice, "Susy, take in them ere clothes; the gamblers is comin'."

The above anecdote illustrates the light in which gamblers were viewed in this country half a generation since. The people were taught to consider the name a synonym for a set of cut-throats, whose mildest crimes were to decoy the unwary into their "hells," and there rob them; that they were the patrons of boxers, bruisers, and the lowest and vilest of every class, and recognized no law except the bullet and the knife, which they were ready to resort to on every occasion, to avenge real or fancied slights or wrongs. From pulpit, press, and forum, were such denunciations hurled on their devoted heads, by persons who knew as much of their principles, habits, manners, and customs, as of those of the people living in the unexplored regions of Central Africa. Society voted gaming a vice, consequently none dared defend it or its votaries, and sectarian hypocrites, political demagogues, and the "unco guid" of every style whose stock in trade was the denunciation of sin, seized upon gaming and its votaries as capital whenever they wished to extol their own virtues, or advance their moral or pecuniary interests in the religious community. As a constant dripping of water will wear even a stone, so their tirades of abuse were so frequent and violent throughout the whole country, that people at last settled down to accept the idea that the bad things they were constantly hearing of gamblers must be true, and no viler criminals were tolerated by society. 'Twas not the ignorant and uneducated alone who took up these notions, but they were adopted by men

of intelligence and refinement, who, never having come in contact with gamblers, or heard any defense of them, believed the vituperations of their enemies to be sober truth.

In the spring of 1841, four gamblers chartered a stage to take them from Selma, Alabama, to Montgomery, in the same State. As the coach was passing a splendid mansion on the outskirts of the town, a gentlemanly looking person in clerical attire hailed it, and making a motion to hand up the valise he carried, desired a passage to Benton, fifteen miles further on. The driver informed him that the conveyance was private, and chartered by the four gentlemen inside. The gentleman, on hearing this, advanced to the coach and introduced himself to its occupants as the Rev. Dr. Breckinridge, of Danville, Ky., stating that he was engaged to deliver a lecture in Benton that evening, and begged a passage to that place. The gamblers with one accord invited him to take a seat in the stage. As the coach rolled over the road, the reverend Doctor entertained his auditors with a fund of anecdote and information from his well-stocked mind, and conversed with fluency and ease upon the topics of the day, attentively listened to by his orderly and appreciative audience. One of the latter, being anxious to know in what light their reverend guest regarded gamblers, without seeming to do so, led the conversation into that channel. With a tongue of fire did the Doctor pitch into gamblers; and the more denunciatory he became of their crimes and infamies, the more attentive and interested became his listeners. "They (gamblers) were a debased, depraved, besotted class, in both habits and tastes; treacherous and unscrupulous, and leaving no means untried of destroying the honor and happiness of the youth of the country. The reverend gentleman was now under a full head of steam. "Why, gentlemen," he continued, "they burned Mobile last winter. I suppose you have heard of it?" None of his auditors had ever done so. "Well, sirs, it is a well-ascertained fact that those frequent fires which occurred there during the winter, were the diabolical work of the gamblers living in the city."

"I can't see why they should wish to burn up the city?" mentioned one of his auditors.

"I'll tell you, gentlemen. Previous to last winter, the planters were in the habit of sending their sons to Mobile to sell their crops, and when they had received the money for the cotton, the

gamblers of the city caused them to be decoyed into their places, and robbed them of their money. Finding it no longer safe to entrust these sales to their sons, this last winter the planters themselves took their crops to Mobile and sold them, which, depriving them of their usual plunder, so enraged the gamblers, that they caused the city to be fired."

"I can't see how such a proceeding was going to benefit them," reiterated the first speaker.

"It can't, it is true!" said the reverend speaker, emphatically; "but it shows to what extent the miscreants will go for the sake of revenge."

At this stage of the proceedings, an old veteran of the gaming-table stuck his head out of the window and called to the person driving, "I say, driver, can't you give me a seat outside? It's a little too damned hot for me in here."

The coach was stopped, and room made for the heated gentleman beside the driver. Shortly after, the coach reached Benton, when the Doctor took a cordial leave of his new acquaintances, with many professions of thanks.

Dr. Breckinridge knew nothing of gaming or gamblers, save what he had learned from the lying and malicious reports of the day. He had never even seen the inside of a gambling-house, nor been thrown into the society of a gambler, that he was aware of. His prejudices were built upon the garbled reports of newspapers, which were in every respect the direct opposite of the truth. He had read and listened to these tirades of abuse against gamblers so often, that his faith in their veracity had become as fixed in his mind as the articles of his creed. With all his learning and astute perception, he had never once stopped to ask himself whether there was room for doubt, and if he were not laboring under a delusion, as it was only right he should have done, instead of taking everything for granted, as he had done. He had merely looked at one side of the question, without giving to the other the slightest thought. The press throughout the country informed him solemnly that gamblers were worse than pirates, without having their courage. When it was desirable to give to some atrocious villain a deeper tinge of infamy, he was stigmatized as a gambler. If a gang of counterfeiters flooded the country with their forgeries, it was the work of gamblers. Should the mail be robbed, it was done, or

at any rate planned, by gamblers. If an imaginary insurrection was going to take place among the slaves, they were incited thereto by gamblers. No dark deed of any sort could be perpetrated unless a gambler was at the bottom of it.

A few hours after the terrible tornado of 1840 had swept over Natchez, a gentleman who was seated at the supper-table in one of the principal hotels was describing to some of the guests present, the fearful havoc made by it. Among his auditors was a stuttering sport, who had frequently felt keenly the unjust accusations hurled against the fraternity of which he was a worthy member. He seized the occasion to give vent to his indignation by stuttering out, "I-I-I-I sup-p-p-ose they'll s-s-say the g-g-g-gamblers b-b-brought the t-t-tornado here."

I shall now endeavor to enumerate the causes, or some of them at least, which brought the gambling community into such bad odor, and led to the unjust prejudices against them, which have existed for the last thirty odd years. Somewhere about the year 1835, a man named Murrill was convicted of negro-stealing in the State of Tennessee, and sentenced for ten years to the Nashville penitentiary. The principal witness against him was a man named Stewart. This man published a pamphlet, which had an extensive circulation throughout the country, and upon the people living in the Mississippi valley it exerted a most pernicious influence. Stewart, in his pamphlet, related how he had for several months dogged the footsteps of Murrill, following him from the State of Tennessee into those of Mississippi, Missouri, and Arkansas, and that his labors were finally rewarded by the discovery that Murrill was the chief of a secret organization, a formidable band of villains, who styled themselves "The League of Secret Brotherhood." Having adroitly wormed himself into the confidence of Murrill, he drew from him the facts that the "League" numbered over 3000 members, and was composed of highwaymen, negro-thieves, counterfeiters, and the entire gambling community, from the great lakes to the gulf. Murrill, as its chief, was clothed with supreme power. He appointed and removed subordinates at pleasure. All derelictions from duty were immediately communicated to him by his secret spies, and all traitors or refractory officers or men assassinated by his orders. The League, whose ramifications extended throughout the entire West and South-

west, was divided into classes, each class roaming over the country, and exercising its peculiar vocation wherever it was found most profitable. That is to say, highwaymen, negro-thieves, horse-thieves, gamblers, and counterfeiters, each pursued their calling in separate bands, but were compelled by the laws of the "League," to aid, abet, and defend each other, should occasion arise. Each class was commanded by a chief, who was subject to the order of Murrill, responsible to him for the discipline of his band, and whatever plunder it had captured. Members recognized each other by secret signs and grips. Murrill soon became so impressed with the idea that Stewart possessed extraordinary ability, that he not only initiated him into the "League," but made him his chief lieutenant, and after he had raised him to this elevated position, communicated to him a grand scheme which he had concocted and arranged, and was now all ready to put into execution, which would enrich the entire brotherhood. He stated to Stewart that his agents had, during the last year, been at work among the negroes along the valley of the Mississippi, preparing them for a simultaneous revolt against their masters. To facilitate this movement, the funds of the League had been invested in fire-arms and ammunition for the same, from the North, and a large amount of these were already in the hands of the slaves and their white sympathizers. He stated that a few months more would see their preparations complete, and that the following Christmas had been selected as the day on which the rising should take place. The "League" would have its forces at Natchez, Vicksburg, and New Orleans, ready to take instant advantage of the confusion caused by the insurrection, and seize the treasure in the banks of those cities, while the slaves were killing their masters. It is needless to say that the soul of Stewart burned within him to rid the world of such an atrocious villain; but, in order to find out all his plans, he dissembled and appeared delighted with the scheme. Like a sleuth-hound he trailed the footsteps of his victim, until he was able to prove that the great captain of the "League" had laid himself amenable to the law, by stealing a slave, the property of a widow woman in rather humble circumstances. Great criminals sometimes stoop to rather petty crimes.

The excitement created by this pamphlet in the valley of the

Mississippi is not to be described. It was eagerly perused by all who could read, and those who could not, heard its contents continually ventilated from the stump by political demagogues. To express a doubt of the truth of anything contained in the pamphlet was to lay one's self open to suspicions of being a member of the "League;" consequently the mouths of thinking men were closed. In such periods, when the people are stirred to the depths, and a prey to anxiety and fear, the political and religious demagogue creeps into power. By them the constituted authorities are displaced and the laws set aside. As they have foisted themselves into power through the doubts and fears of the people, so they sustain themselves in their positions, keeping them constantly in dread, by the terrible idea that atrocious villains are secretly in their midst, plotting their destruction by deeds of blood and infamy. Their trumped-up tales of hidden danger are listened to with avidity by the people, until confidence is destroyed, and each believing "every man's hand against him," resolves that "his hand shall be against every man." Their fears induce the weak-minded and unscrupulous to cast suspicions upon others, in order that they themselves may appear honest. Terror holds high carnival, and cruelties worthy the vilest and worst days of the Inquisition ensue; from which the virtuous and unoffending are by no means exempt. Such was the state of affairs created by Stewart's pamphlet in many of the scattered settlements along the valley of the Mississippi. Men were hanged, upon the shallowest pretenses that they were members of the obnoxious League, or, what was to many quite as bad, cruelly lashed at the whipping-post; the banishment of men from their homes, and the confiscation of all they possessed in the world, was considered a mild punishment by the Lynch courts which everywhere sprung up. The demagogues were unable in Vicksburg and Natchez to gain the confidence of the citizens sufficiently for them to overthrow the laws until the following event took place:

At the time of which I write Vicksburg was the central point of speculation in the Southwest, on account of the sales of rich cotton lands taking place at that period, in its vicinity. Adventurous spirits of every description gathered there, in hopes of bettering their pecuniary condition; the country was flooded with "wild-cat" money, then circulated at par; and in the mania for

speculation every one seemed more or less carried away. Fortunes were made and lost in a single day. Gamblers flocked there from all parts of the Union, and at least fifty banks were opened in the city, nearly all of which did a thriving business, in spite of the abuse heaped upon their owners by the press of the city. Aside from their profession, nothing derogatory to their character or behavior could be alleged against them; they were quiet and orderly in all their habits, and the soul of probity in all their dealings. But owing to the feeling against them, and the vituperations showered upon them by the press, they were finally compelled to flee from the place, in order to escape the unreasonable vengeance of an infuriated mob.

The Fourth of July in 1835 was celebrated with more than usual splendor by the citizens of Vicksburg, and to enhance its glories the militia soldiery of Natchez had come up the river to assist in the glorification. While dinner was going forward, a ruffian, named Cobbler, inspired thereto by the potent spirit of old rye, amused himself by walking over the tables, among the dishes with which they were laid. Some of his friends laid violent hands on him, captured and took him from the room. This outrageous conduct created a terrible excitement, and the report was somehow circulated that Cobbler was a professional gambler, which was entirely false. He was a blacksmith of Natchez, and while living there had gained some celebrity as a pugilist. Considering it an easier mode of life than that of plying a sledge-hammer, he threw up the latter and devoted his whole attention to the cultivation of the manly art. Like most characters of his kind, he hung around gambling-houses and preyed upon gamblers for support, and was, therefore, as is almost invariably the case, considered by the sapient public a gambler. This outrage might have passed off in the ordinary way, and without creating any unusual amount of disturbance, had not a few demagogues taken advantage of it to inflame the passions of the citizens of the place against the gamblers. A public meeting was called, which, in the excitement of the hour, was largely attended, and the crowd was addressed by speakers who intemperately advocated the expulsion by violence, from their midst, of every gambler in the city. Resolutions to that effect were carried almost without a dissenting voice. No time for consideration was taken by the meeting, or to ascertain whether the gamblers



of the place were in any way responsible for the outrage committed by Cobbler, or whether he was a gambler; that was not what the demagogues, who were pulling the wires of their puppets, the people, were aiming at. On the spur of the moment a vigilance committee was organized with avowedly the express intention of forcibly ridding the city of all gamblers within its limits. Many of the more respectable citizens of the place expressed their disapprobation of such summary proceedings, but the public mind, already at fever-heat from the reading of Stewart's pamphlet and the violent attacks of the press upon gamblers, was in no condition to listen to the remonstrances of their peace and order loving townsmen.

Facing the steamboat landing was a low groggery, the resort of third-rate sharpers and river thieves of all descriptions, and extensively patronized by the lower orders of boatmen, who were frequently swindled out of their earnings there, or followed by some of its inmates or frequenters, and knocked down and robbed on the dark levee. A 24 No. roulette wheel was the only instrument appertaining to a banking game of chance about the premises, and the only show the patrons of the place had to win, should they desire to hazard their money outside of games of cards with their immediate friends. The brawls and frequent robberies taking place at this disreputable establishment had brought down upon it the loud disapprobation of the citizens, and even the river men had, at various times, threatened to tear it down. Upon this resort, then, did the committee make their first attack, ordering its proprietor to close up his place and leave the city—a thing he flatly refused to do. A company of about thirty lynchers were sent to the obnoxious house under orders to tear it down and seize all its inmates. They approached the premises in double file to the music of a fife and drum, and armed with guns and other weapons, when, after they had got within a very short distance, a volley was fired from the house into their ranks, killing and wounding several; among the first, the leader of the party. This unlooked-for reception, together with the fall of their leader, caused the attacking party to beat a hasty retreat. The proprietor of the house, instead of abandoning it, foolishly determined to defend it with his life, and being joined by three friends as reckless and foolhardy as himself, they had armed themselves and prepared for the siege.

The place being but a mere shanty built of pine boards, could offer no resistance of any account of itself to the lynchers, but the inmates, on the spur of the moment, had piled furniture and whatever loose lumber they could lay their hands on, against the doors, pierced the sides of the shanty with port-holes, from which to fire on the advancing foe, and thus awaited the return of the lynchers. The latter, after their repulse, retreated some distance from the house and sent for reinforcements. On the arrival of these, a cordon of sentinels surrounded the place at a respectful distance, in order to prevent any of the inmates from making their escape. A cannon was procured, a few shots from which sent the rickety old shell tumbling about the ears of its defenders, who were all captured. The four men were then, without a moment's delay, dragged to the top of the hill, and, without even the form of a trial, hanged on a tree. One of the victims was the man who run the roulette game, and the center of the wheel was tied up to his dangling body. On the morning subsequent to the hanging, the wife of the man who kept the place came and begged the body of her husband, that she might give it decent burial; but instead of granting this pious request, the leader of the lynchers drove her away with curses and insults not mentionable to ears polite. I met the brute in Brownsville, Texas, eleven years later. He was a debased and drunken sot, so low that he was more an object of pity than resentment, though the finger of scorn had never ceased to be pointed at him as one of the stranglers of Vicksburg.

Shortly after the repulse of the first body of lynchers, and the death of its leader, guards were stationed around the steamboat landing, to prevent any of the gamblers from making their escape. Bodies of lynchers were also sent to patrol every avenue of escape from the city. But before they had thought of taking these precautions, many of the gamblers, warned of the coming storm, had sought safety on a timely steamer bound to New Orleans from Vicksburg, and which left before the fatal shots were fired. Cobbler, the cause of all the disturbance, also made his escape on the same steamer. A few gamblers, conscious of committing no crime, and therefore expecting no violence, decided on remaining until the excitement should have blown over. When the news of the killing of the lynch leader spread through the city like wild-fire, they began to apprehend danger. Fol-

lowing fast on this startling news, the cry arose of "Death to gamblers!" If these ominous words, following fast on the heels of the killing of the leader of those who sent up the shout, failed to convince the most skeptical or blanch the cheek of the bravest among them, the summary hanging of the four men convinced them that their lives hung trembling in the balance. Many citizens, among whom were officers of the law, gave to them asylums in their houses until the storm had passed, when they were smuggled on board steamers. A planter living seven miles from the city sheltered five of them until they were able to make their escape by a passing steamer bound for New Orleans.

A gambler named James Hoard, being unable to get on board the steamer which carried off the first party from the city, became very uneasy. He scanned the river with longing eyes both up and down, in hopes another steamer would heave in sight, but he was doomed to disappointment.

While in this unenviable state of mind, the news of the killing of the leader, and wounding of two others of the lynchers, reached him. The tidings sent a cold chill to the heart of Hoard. He started for his hotel with a rapid step, determined to lock himself up in his room, and await the issue of events. Scarcely had he gained the doors of this asylum, when the shout, "Death to gamblers!" fell like the sentence of doom upon his ears. From that moment his memory was a blank, until he found himself seated astride a log in the midst of a swamp five miles below the city, where he remained all night, listening, as he expressed it, "to an orchestra composed of shrieking owls and growling frogs." By dint of swimming and wading, after daylight again visited him, he managed to reach "*terra firma*;" and soon discovered, to his great joy, that he was but a very short distance from the river. In a few hours a steamer on her way to New Orleans was hailed by him, and at his request he was taken on board. Anxious to know what sort of an appearance he presented after his forced vigil, he walked up to one of the handsome mirrors with which the cabin was adorned. It was some time before he could convince himself that the image there reflected was that of the "*bona-fide*" Jimmy Hoard. The raven locks which had yesterday adorned his cranium were turned to an iron gray.

"—few it white in a single night,  
As men's hair grows through sudden fear."

In those sluggish days, no telegraph wires flashed the news to the four quarters of the Union, and the next morning told it to the dwellers in all the larger cities, at breakfast, through the medium of the daily journals. Post-boys, stages, and steamers, then informed the people of the United States that they were indebted to the worthy and virtuous citizens of Vicksburg, for the stringing up of four abandoned wretches of the genus gambler, and called upon society in general to be properly grateful. But society was in this case, as in many others, grossly imposed upon by false representations. Neither of the four strangled unfortunates were gamblers, as the press of that day, and long afterwards, boldly asserted. That the mob would not have scrupled to hang a myriad of gamblers, could they have lain hands on them, is a matter no one is likely to dispute; the attention is merely called to the lying reports of the press of those days, which seems, certainly, to be more pleased to have published a lie than a plain, unvarnished fact. The man who turned the roulette wheel was the only one among them who could, in any sense, be called a gambler; and a low one indeed he must have been, to pursue his calling in so low a den. Gamblers, properly speaking, have never yet tolerated the society of men whose associates were low thieves, if they knew it, or, in fact, high ones either. The four hanged wretches were all reckless desperadoes, capable, no doubt, of committing the darkest crimes, if one may judge from the company they kept; but the fact still stands good, that, by the laws of every civilized country on earth, they were justified in protecting their home against the attacks of a lawless mob, nor will all the fine phrases in the English language convince right-minded and reflecting people that the men who so summarily sent them before their Maker, were more or less than cowardly assassins.

Stewart's pamphlets and the Vicksburg tragedy were the precursors of every sort of persecution to gamblers. They were looked upon in the South and Southwest as land pirates. Shortly after the Vicksburg affair, placards were posted in most of the large towns and cities of the South and Southwest, warning gamblers to leave, and not to return, under penalty of the same fate. In the cities of Memphis, Nashville, Louisville, and St. Louis, mobs arose with the avowed design of hanging every gambler they could lay hands upon; but in such times it is

generally not very easy to catch the gamblers to hang. A mob was also organized for the same purpose in Cincinnati; but, unfortunately, its humane intentions were frustrated by a proclamation of the Mayor, declaring that gamblers were entitled to the same protection enjoyed by the other citizens, and, in the event of any disturbance occurring, or any violence being attempted, he should deal with the offenders according to law. In Baltimore, the indignant mob razed to the ground a gambling-house kept by a man named Johnston.

During these exciting times gamblers usually made "discretion the better part of valor," and disappeared until the storm had passed over; or, as it was termed by the press, the "public indignation" had subsided, when they "came forth from their vile dens like adders tempted forth by the sunshine." The press of the country, however, kept the public hate and loathing for gamblers alive by its constant vituperations and assertions of unfair and unjust dealing, and neither the demagogue on his stump nor the preacher in his pulpit failed to add his influence to theirs. Such was the effect of all this, that the unfortunate objects found themselves beyond the pale of the laws, the legitimate prey of fraud and violence. Should his money be snatched or otherwise taken from him by force, the press endorsed the glorious act, and the moral portion of the community was so delighted at the cute trick, that it indulged in a general laugh, and shook hands all round. The police officer who, by fraud or violence, could capture a party of gamblers while at play, and rob them of their gambling tools and money, had made his mark on the shifting sand of the world's good opinion.

While these feelings and opinions respecting the fraternity were at their height, a fellow by the name of J. H. Greene, better known as "Greene, the reformed gambler," furnished to a young Kentuckian the material for writing a book, purporting to be an exposition of the manners, customs, and habits of the gambling community, and also pretended to expose their methods of conducting their swindling games and other operations. His book was favorably received, and created considerable sensation. The times were ripe for it, and the public was ready to swallow any tale, however preposterous, to the discredit of gamblers, no difference how vile or monstrous. No charlatan had ever a larger field for his operations, or so many credulous subjects ready and

willing—nay, more, eager to be humbugged. His book taught, first, that all gamblers were thieves; secondly, that they never played on the square; thirdly, that faro had less percentage than any other banking game, and that it was twenty per cent. worse than stealing, anyhow. The moral Mr. Greene, finding his falsehoods swallowed with such avidity, now took a tour through the country, lecturing in all the towns of any size, on gambling, and giving illustrations of the different methods of cheating at cards, dice, etc. While lecturing he clearly demonstrated to his audience that he could read by their backs the suits and denomination of every sort of playing-card manufactured.

When this immaculate gentleman had finished his disquisition on the manners, habits, and practices of gamblers, their several modes of cheating, pulling two cards at faro, palming, stocking, thimble-rigging, bottom-dealing, dice-cogging, etc., he was accustomed to announce to his audience that every playing-card manufactured was stamped with secret signs, which were readable by every gambler in the world, but which, to the uninitiated, meant nothing; and to demonstrate the truth of his assertion he would take a coin from his pocket and desire that some one would fetch from the nearest place, where they were procurable, a pack of cards. If, as happened in ninety-nine cases out of every hundred, no one volunteered, each one waiting for his neighbor to do so, a capper stepped from the audience, took the money, disappeared, and shortly reappeared with a stamped pack of cards, which he presented to the sanctimonious Greene. That spotless worthy now shuffled them in full view of the people, and would then tell his astonished audience the suit and size of each card as it lay on the pack, face downward, before exposing it to the gaze of his bewildered and startled hearers.

Should any adventurous gentleman among the spectators, having before his eyes the fear of being humbugged, snatch the coin, and himself rush out in search of a pack, or have on hand one of his own private packs, Greene was prepared for such an emergency. He would take the pack from the hands of his doubtful auditor, and calling the attention of his audience by telling them to watch him closely and be sure he did not change it, commence shuffling. After he had done so he would astonish his gaping auditors by reading each size and suit correctly

from the back as easily as he had done the stamped ones. So cleverly did he accomplish this trick, that some of the most practical gamblers of the day tried to acquaint themselves with the "*modus operandi*," and failed to do so, though perfectly well satisfied that a fraud existed somewhere. His lectures were attended by philosophers, practical scientific men, astute lawyers, learned legislators, shrewd thieves, and cunning detectives, not one of whom doubted that Greene was a true disciple of honesty; but not a few gamblers knew him to be a fraud, but had not the power, or, to speak more correctly, the courage, to expose him. His trick, when known, was, as is usual in such cases, exceedingly simple. A small piece of looking-glass being inserted or laid upon the desk when he was lecturing, showed him the face of the card as he removed it from the pack.

According to Greene's account of himself, he was the associate of the thieves, desperadoes, and counterfeiters who infested the banks of the Ohio and Mississippi rivers from Cincinnati to New Orleans, for the space of fifteen years. His gambling seems to have been a petty career of playing swindling games of short cards on steamers, by playing on the unwary and verdant, stamped and marked cards, or giving them large hands at "all-fours," poker, brag, euchre, etc., and beating them with better ones. When not engaged in the immaculate manner described, he followed up fairs and race-courses, and other public gatherings, where he entertained the verdant with cogg'd dice and thimble-rigging. It is believed by many shrewd old gamblers that revenge was the motive which induced the pious Greene to change his mode of life. In those days it was customary for master sharpers to hire the privilege of race-courses. One of these enterprising worthies, named John Campbell, secured, about 1847, the gambling privilege of the race-track at Richmond. While operating with his horde of low sharpers inside in the gambling booth, several nomadic brethren of the lower orders had opened their games of chuck, strap, and thimble-game outside the track, and near to the gate; among these was Greene, who was running a small chuck-table. Mr. Campbell, regarding these outsiders in the light of an infringement on his privileges, sent several of his hired bullies to disperse them, "*vi et armis*." In the general *melee* which ensued, Greene received a most unmerciful beating. This outrage upon his person may have given him serious



stamped ones. So some of the most practical themselves with the though perfectly well His lectures were attended by astute lawyers, cunning detectives, not a disciple of honesty; fraud, but had not the courage, to expose him. Each case, exceedingly being inserted or laid wed him the face of

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notions of book-making, and made him burn to expose the practices and tricks of gamblers to the whole world; but to my mind the gain he expected to get from his exposition was quite as potent a reason as the desire for revenge, and the main object of his reformation. However, be that as it may, I have never yet found a single gambler willing to admit that he ever knew Greene to be engaged in or connected with any square game in his life, of any description whatever, nor in his autobiography does he once speak of being connected with a first-class square gambler, and mentions but a single instance of ever being in their rooms, when he speaks gratefully of the kind treatment he there received, and also of the gentlemanly and hospitable manners of its proprietors. It is wonderful how this low and debased fraud should have deceived some of the brightest intellects in the country. His false representations again aroused, in all its virulence, the feeling against gamblers, and to such a pitch did it run that the States of New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Maryland, Kentucky, Alabama, Tennessee, and even Congress, for the District of Columbia, passed severe laws against gaming. In some of these States the dealing of a banking game of chance was punishable by two years in the State's prison; while in others the penalty was five. Officers of justice, even, in many cases, would warn offenders of the danger they stood in from the law; therefore these ultra severe measures defeated themselves. Finally the majority of the States repealed these very stringent laws a few years after passing them; but in the States of New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Maryland, and also in the District of Columbia, they are still on the statute-books, though virtually a dead letter.

None stand higher as a class, in the scale of probity, than gamblers. The envious and jealous are certainly to be found among them, as among other classes of men, but few who are meanly avaricious; and, taken as a body, they are surpassed in generosity and liberality by none. In the scale of morals they will compare favorably with any class in this country; and if the record of crime be any proof of my assertion, statistics show that in our States prisons may be found men from every walk of life, except the gamblers. And not a single one has, by the laws of the land, expiated his crime upon the gallows throughout the length and breadth of this great republic. Charles Cora was, indeed,



hanged by the Vigilance Committee of San Francisco, and Mumford by a military tribunal in New Orleans; and the taking-off of either of these men has never added much to the credit of their executioners. Richardson, the U. S. Marshal whom Cora killed, was a Baltimore Plug-Ugly, and a shooter and stabber of the first water; and when in a state of intoxication, which was not seldom, used his weapon with the most sublime disregard of the safety of friend or foe. While on one of his periodical sprees, which always lasted him three or four days, he encountered Cora at the Cosmopolitan Coffee House, on Montgomery Street, for the first time; an altercation ensued which resulted in Richardson's drawing a Derringer and trying to fire it at Cora; but before he could carry out his design he was disarmed by his friends and taken away. On the following evening the parties again met at the same place as before, and, through the mediation of friends, a reconciliation was effected, and they drank together as a symbol that all hard feelings were drowned between them. Immediately afterwards Richardson took Cora by the arm and desired him to take a walk with him, which the latter foolishly consented to do. It was now about eight o'clock; the night was dark, and five minutes did not elapse, after they started out, before the report of a pistol rung out on the night air, and every person in the crowd started for the spot from whence the report seemed to come. On arriving, the body of Richardson was discovered lying across the iron grating which covered the pavement before a large mercantile establishment one block away from the Cosmopolitan. Beside the dead body of Richardson lay a Derringer pistol; the scabbard of his bowie-knife, fastened to his waistband, was empty, the knife itself having dropped into the cellar beneath, where it was afterwards found. Cora was arrested, a few moments after the killing was done, about a hundred yards from the scene of the tragedy. Upon his person were found two Derringers, one loaded and one empty, and showing that it had been discharged but a few moments since. This was the substance of all the evidence alleged against Cora on the trial, which took place while public opinion was inflamed against him to the highest pitch, lashed by a licentious press into fury, for no other reason except that Richardson had borne the honorable title of U. S. Marshal, while his murderer was nothing in the estimation of the people but a vile gambler. In

those days it was not customary for a murderer to get into the witness-box and give testimony in his own behalf; consequently what took place between Cora and Richardson, after they left the Cosmopolitan Coffee House, remained, as far as the jury and the public in general were concerned, a profound mystery. But being, as I was, acquainted with both men, I see no reason to doubt the truth of the version given by Cora, while in prison, to his friend, James Horton, or his counsel, Mr. McDougal. It certainly bears to my mind every semblance of truth.

Cora's statement was to the effect that, soon after they reached the pavement, Richardson brought up the subject of their last night's dispute, and insisted that he (Cora) should acknowledge himself wrong in the whole matter, which he emphatically refused to do. This altercation continued until they had reached the end of the block, still walking arm in arm, and turned down a side street. They continued thus to walk forward until they had gone several yards, Richardson still arguing, and trying to induce Cora to acknowledge himself the aggressor on the night before. Cora still refusing, Richardson suddenly stopped, and pushing his companion up against the side of a building, and holding him with his left hand in such a manner that he could not escape, while with his right hand he made a motion as if to draw from his belt his bowie-knife, and demanded that he should confess he had done him a grievous wrong. Cora said he had kept his own hand on his Derringer ever since his companion had mooted the disagreeable subject, but that he also tried in every way to conciliate him, short of the shameful acknowledgment he wished to extort from him. The moment Richardson attempted to draw his knife to enforce his demands, the contents of the Derringer were discharged into his heart. The jury failing to agree on a verdict, Cora was remanded to prison to await a new trial. Shortly after these events, James King, of Wan, editor of the *San Francisco Evening Bulletin*, was shot down in the streets by one James P. Casey, a member of the Board of Supervisors, and the owner of a weekly newspaper published in that city. King had published in his paper a scurrilous article reflecting on Casey, for which he was shot down by the latter on the street in cold blood. The indignation caused by this dastardly act culminated in the organization of a Vigilance Committee. Its first act was to avenge the death of King by hang-

ing Casey, and, without the remotest shadow of law to justify the brutal act, hung Cora also with him. The avowed purpose of the Committee was to rid the city of its political rowdies and ballot-box stuffers. Cora was never identified with these classes, nor did he anywhere bear the reputation of a dangerous man. The man Mumford, hung by General Butler for tearing down from the Mint the United States flag, was naturally a half idiot, and what little brains he ever possessed were crazed by the excessive use of liquor. The world applauded when he was hanged for tearing down the flag—an act which he never perpetrated. A Kanaka boy ascended to the roof of the Mint, climbed the pole, detached the banner, and threw it into the street. Mumford, who happened to be there, picked it up, and dragged it after him through the muddy street, at the same time tearing it in pieces, and distributing it in a braggadocio manner to those whom he met. Of course a crowd gathered about him, and an army of boys followed at his heels, to see the fun. None but fools or lunatics commit such barefaced follies. Butler might have considered Mumford a fit subject of which to make an example; but it would have spoken better for humanity in general, and added far more to the credit of our nation, had he, instead of consigning the unfortunate wretch to the rope of the hangman, placed him in an asylum for lunatics.

There has never been in our country a more law-abiding class of citizens than the gamblers. I know, in the whole course of my roving existence, of but a single instance of one being concerned in a Vigilance Committee or a lynching party of any description. In our new States and territories, where the mobocracy so often trampled under foot the constituted authority, among the first persons called upon by the rightful officers of the law, to assist in sustaining their authority, were the gamblers. In their bravery and loyalty the utmost confidence was placed.

In his habits the gambler is, in ninety-nine cases out of every hundred, excessively clean. Cleanliness in his creed is far ahead of godliness. Personal purity is with him an indispensable necessity. He lives on the best he can procure, and surrounds himself and family, should he possess one, with every comfort and luxury he can compass. This is true both of his home and his gambling-house. He there treats his friends with the greatest liberality and hospitality. In manners he is cour-

teous and affable, and seldom, even when young and ignorant, shows rudeness to strangers or inoffensive persons of any description. Good-behavior is one of the articles of his creed. He is neat in his dress, too often extravagant, and in youth generally fond of display; he sometimes also, at this period, gives way to dissipation, though to no greater extent than other young men having the same command of money. When gamblers have had the power to choose their customers, and close their doors on such as were inclined to ruffianly behavior, order and decorum have invariably reigned around their games. Even in the lower class of gambling-rooms, wrangling, blasphemous or obscene language is not tolerated, and persons persisting in behaving themselves with rudeness, or disagreeably, are shut out, regardless of wealth or standing, except in some cases where the gambler dare not refuse to admit some bully or ward politician, fearful of violence to his game from either themselves or their satellites. In the best order of gambling-houses may be met men of cultivation and refinement, numbers of whom move in the highest walks of life, and as much decorum prevails among the guests as would be expected in a party of friends during an entertainment at the house of one of their number. The proprietor treats his patrons equally with the greatest courtesy and consideration. He who merely bets a single white check is treated with the same respectful politeness as the lord of thousands whose bets reach the limit of the bank. The gambling-table equalizes all who take their seats before it. It is a peculiar mart of trade, where cringing and flattery are not a part of the stock, and in no way belong to it. The bankers treat all with suavity, conceding to each his rights and nothing more, and no banker having the least respect for himself or his establishment is ever seen to display the smallest sign of joy or pain at his gains or losses.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

## WOLF-TRAPS.

The ground was strewn with the many-hued leaves of autumn when the Major and myself concluded to start out once more on a tramp, this time to the far West. We had been loitering away a couple of months of the heated term at the White Sulphur Springs of Virginia; a place which, without being very entertaining, we found by no means beneficial to our pockets.

Arriving at Porkopolis, we found the levee crowded with steamers of all sizes, many of the larger class plying between that port and New Orleans, having but lately been released from the moorings where they had been tied up during the summer months. Their appearance at the wharf, together with the piles of freight with which it was covered, plainly denoted that navigation was thoroughly reopened, without the corroboration given to that fact by the swelling of the turbid waters of the Ohio.

"Jack, would you like to take a stroll among the 'Wolf-traps,' sir?" inquired the Major on the morning subsequent to our arrival in Cincinnati.

"Wolf-traps," I repeated, "what are they?"

"They are only to be appreciated, sir, by seeing them."

"Then let us go, by all means," I rejoined.

A few moments' rapid walk from our hotel brought us to the steamboat landing. We then turned up one of the side streets leading from it, and a few doors from the corner paused for a moment at the foot of a wooden stairway. We ascended and reached a landing on the first floor, turned and entered a side door which opened into a long, narrow, and excessively dirty room, which could be divided at pleasure into two apartments by sliding-doors. The whole was carpeted with a dilapidated straw-matting, and decorated with several rough wooden boxes, which, being filled with sawdust, served as spittoons when the patrons desired to indulge in expectoration. The front windows, which looked upon the street, were protected by green Venetian blinds, the walls had at some remote period been papered, but were now so smoked that the original pattern was undecipherable. They were adorned at intervals by various penny

pictures tacked to the wall, as well as several in frames, representing celebrated racers, distinguished generals and statesmen, steamboats, fishing and hunting scenes, etc., etc. The furniture included a few dozen of cane-seat chairs, a poker-table covered with a discolored green cloth, and at the furthest end of the room a large faro ditto, also covered with the usual green cloth, on which now reposed a lay-out, a set of chips, and a card-box. Against one side of the front room stood a strong oaken side-board, which had long since seen its best days, and on it rested a wooden pail filled with water, in which a gourd swam invitingly for those who desired to quench their thirst—the only entertainment of any sort which the establishment offered to its patrons. But on the ground floor flourished a coffee-house, which dispensed to all who desired both heating and cooling beverages, and the “trap” maintained a sable attendant to receive the money of its patrons, and procure for them its equivalent in whatever refreshments they might require.

Casting our eyes over the room, we perceived that but three persons were present there, besides ourselves, the hour being, as yet, too early for customers. One of these was a little dried-up fellow, about fifty years of age, of a swarthy visage and small black eyes, and bushy whiskers of the same raven hue. When he perceived us, he came forward quickly and shook the Major warmly by the hand.

“Glad to see you looking so well, Mr. Robbins,” said the polite Major.

“I don’t feel so, sir,” returned the person addressed, in a lugubrious tone, and with a doleful shake of the head.

“No! You surprise me! What’s the matter, sir?” inquired the Major.

“D—n bad here,” ejaculated the moody gentleman, thumping himself on the chest.

“Well, sir! if health’s bad, trade must be good, eh, Robbins?”

“No! no! no it ain’t, Major! It’s very bad, sir,” replied that worthy, speaking, if possible, in a more doleful strain than before. “We hain’t made a winning in ten days; every bank’s been broken as fast as ’twas put up, and we’ve put up more’n a hundred, I’ll bet.”

“Can they do it always?” inquired the Major, with a show of interest.

"It seems so," whined Robbins. "D—n me if I don't believe the house is 'hoo-dood.' But where have you been so long?" he asked.

"In Virginia," replied the Major.

"After keards?"

"No, sir! I've done no gambling; have been engaged in business," answered the Major, drily.

"You're a deep 'un Major, you are," said the doleful Robbins, with a shake of his head, and bringing to his face a sort of sickly half-way smile. "But don't you know my partner here, Mr. Simons?" he inquired, pointing to a bald-headed, heavy-set gentleman, who was dexterously balancing himself on the extreme tips of the two back legs of his chair, and pretending to occupy himself with a newspaper.

"Haven't the pleasure, but you will introduce me, I hope," returned the polite Major.

"Mr. Simons, this here is my old friend, Major Jenks, and he's a trump, you can bet on't."

After this glowing eulogy, the Major was shaken energetically by the hand, and Mr. Simons expressed his pleasure at becoming acquainted with such an accomplished trump.

"Mr. Johnstone, Major," said Mr. Robbins, in such a tone as he would have used had he been informing him of the death of his dearest friend, and waving his hand towards a coarse, broad-shouldered, hard-fisted specimen of the *genus homo*, who had not, since our entrance, ceased for one moment to walk the floor up and down, as if doing it on time, for a wager. No class of the human family was more disgusting to the Major than the bruiser tribe, and our late experience in New York had not greatly tended to soften his prejudices, to say the least. The personal appearance of Mr. Johnstone bore the indelible stamp of his order. His mien, gait, and every action declared it to the stranger, even if it were not for his scarified face, on which was so legibly written the annals of many a rough-and-tumble fight, that he who saw might read; but the Major never allowed his prejudices to overcome his politeness, and of course acknowledged the favor of Mr. Johnstone's acquaintance, with his usual courtesy.

"It's allers better folks should know one another," remarked Mr. Robbins, in a lugubrious tone, after the hand-shaking attendant on this ceremony had been performed.

"Very properly so, sir," answered the Major.

In these ceremonies of presentation I was left entirely out in the cold. The Major had either altogether forgotten me, or thought me unworthy to be presented to his friends, or, what I believe to be quite as likely, did not consider that I would be in any way benefited by their acquaintance. Be that as it may, my temper was in no degree ruffled by the slight.

I now amused myself by scanning the patrons of the place, who were fast filling the room, and a motley gathering they were, both in dress and personal appearance. Among them were men of all ages, from those in early youth to those whose hair was white with the snows of many winters. Some were dressed in seedy garments, some few plainly and tastefully, some slovenly, and many foppishly; over the persons of this latter class was distributed a profusion of jewelry, some of it the "Simon pure" article, while the flashy pinchbeck chains, rings and breastpins, which disfigured many of them, marked their status in the community more plainly than words could possibly do. The majority were men occupying various positions on the steamboats plying on the river; for instance, cooks, stewards, mates, pilots, and engineers. There was also to be seen a considerable sprinkling of residents of the place representing the rowdy element in force, besides some mechanics, loafers and pot-house political spouters, and others of like grades and callings. The better-behaved amongst them sat quietly looking about them, or reading the newspapers, while the younger and better-dressed portion of the crowd gathered about the faro-table, where they discussed their own bad luck, the merits of fast women, fighting men, race-horses, river steamers, and a hundred kindred subjects. Their conversation was garnished by many terrible oaths and obscene expressions. "Who'll open a snap?" was the oft-repeated question of the crowd, and every time the door was opened, or footsteps were heard ascending the stairs, all eyes were turned in that direction, in hopes it was some one who was in the habit of setting up a bank there. At length their patience was rewarded by the appearance upon the scene of a slight, dandified-looking individual, who was received with a yell of delight from the delectable crowd assembled round the faro-table, while several screamed at the tops of their voices, "Here's Marks; we'll have a bank now!" The gentleman whose arrival had raised this ebul-



lition of feeling, and who was now the centre of attraction to all parties present, was dressed in a rather genteel manner, and wore around his neck a heavy gold chain, and a fine brilliant sparkled in his elaborately-embroidered shirt front. He held in his hand a small gold-headed cane, and advanced into the room and up to that end of it occupied by the faro-table and its appurtenances, with a perfectly blank face, and took no more notice of the yelling, screeching audience, than if he had been the sole occupant of the room. Without bestowing on any person the smallest sign of recognition, he coolly divested himself of his coat, folded it up carefully, and handed it to Mr. Robbins. He now for the first time acknowledged the presence of his enthusiastic audience, and said, contemptuously, "Yes, I'll give you a bank that 'I'll make yer sick, yer rascals!" which polite speech was received with a yell of approbation by the gentlemen assembled about the poker-table. He then moved with a kind of shuffle towards the dealing-chair, and having fixed himself there to his satisfaction, he took with his thumb and finger, from his vest pocket, a half eagle, which he tossed on the table with the utmost "*sang froid*," at the same time crying out "Here, Robbins, give us 'fish' for this." According to custom, that worthy counted him out from the piles of checks on the table five dollars, issuing them at five cents apiece. When he had set Mr. Marks' bank aside, he handed him a dealing-box and a pack of cards. The latter shuffled these according to the most approved method, and placed them in the dealing-box, and during this operation neither spoke, nor in any way noticed, even so much as by a look, any one around him. Silence was evidently Mr. Marks' "best bolt." When ready to receive company, he addressed his audience in the following polite strain: "Gentlemen, I don't want no fightin' at this 'ere game, nor no 'queer' played in on me. Steal everybody's checks but mine, and now, ye d—n rascals, pitch in!" Anxious to have a good view of what was going forward, I managed to make my way next the wall until I got near the dealer; but not before an indignant gentleman whom I had crowded, and who had been in close communion with the whiskey bottle, desired to be informed "where the h—l I was working to." From the position I had gained I could survey the scene at leisure; and it was one to which only the pencil of a Hogarth could have done justice. Seated and standing in every imagin-

able attitude around the table, were tiers of men, the hindmost row standing on tip-toe, and all watching with intense interest the events of the play. Immediately around the table were at least forty persons, of various means, shapes, ages, and complexions, and those among them who were but spectators of the game watched its fluctuations with the same intense interest as those who were hazarding their money upon it.

The banker started off a winner, which did not seem to improve the temper of some of his patrons. While the dealer was making his turn profound silence reigned, and the suppressed breathing of the players, and the sound of the cards as they glided from the box, were the only sounds audible; but the moment the turn was finished, every tongue broke loose, and a clamor, before which that of ancient Babel might hide its diminished head, ensued. The most awfully blasphemous language would be uttered against fortune, by men who had lost but one or two five-cent checks. To the cursing, wrangling, and squabbling about the ownership of checks, the imperturbable Marks paid not the smallest attention. Occasionally he would remonstrate when some one detained the game in placing or exchanging his checks, then he would bring his fist down on the table, with a "Hands up, d—n ye! Do yer want to keep a gentleman here all day?"

"There I go, again!" shrieked out a well-dressed youth, who occupied a front seat at the table, and who was betting one or two five-cent checks at a time. "By G—d! that's the seventh straight bet I've lost," he cried, looking around for sympathy.

"Yer too windy, Grummy," said an elderly gentleman seated near him.

"Am I?" half-screamed Grummy. "If you'd lost half the bets I have within the last two months, you'd be in a lunatic asylum before now!"

"Where d'ye get yer money? I never seed yer work none!" demanded a squealing voice from the crowd.

"I get it with my tongue, yer dirty lad!" retorted the elegant Mr. Grummy. "If you had ter git yourn that way, ye'd starved to death long ago."

"I thought you pinched pockets for it," retorted the squealing voice.

"No! he dusen't do nothing o' the kind," sung out a voice from

the outward circle, "he's got an industrious gal, an' she allers heels him to a stake in ther mornin'."

This sally was received with roars of laughter from the delighted crowd, and brought Mr. Grummy up all standing. Begging money, or borrowing money under false pretenses, was a rare accomplishment among the men of Mr. Grummy's "set," but to be publicly accused of being a thief and of being a dependent upon the bounty of his lady-love, was more than flesh and blood could stand. "Come down stairs, ye dirty loafers, and I'll show ye where I gets my money," roared the exasperated gentleman, wildly flourishing his clenched fists above his head, and inviting his assailants to come and get their heads smashed. As one gentleman was about to accept this polite invitation, and several others started to follow, to see fair play, Mr. Johnstone made his appearance on the scene. He took hold of the belligèrent Mr. Grummy by the shoulders, and forced him into his seat, and then informed him, in the mildest and most dulcet of voices, that if he heard another word from him he'd pitch him head-foremost down stairs.

The bank struggled hard for an existence, but was finally obliged to succumb to capital. Without allowing his ill success to ruffle his temper, Mr. Marks quietly took out what money was in the card-box, in order to redeem his check; meanwhile several piles were shoved under his nose for redemption. When he had surveyed them for a moment, he turned to their owners and said, "You've been dealing with thieves so long, you don't know a gentleman when you see one. Take them checks back, and keep 'em till your turn comes, or you don't get a cent, you scoundrels! Do you hear?" They did hear, and obeyed, without showing any signs of rebellion. Whoever Marks was, it seemed the rough element obeyed and respected him. When he had redeemed his checks, Robbins handed him his coat, which he put on, seized his gold-headed cane in his left hand, and, with a flourish of his right, thus addressed his patrons: "Gentlemen, as my term of office has now expired, allow me to thank you for your generous patronage, and also to carry away with me the remembrance of the happy moments I have passed in your society. This speech was received with boisterous cheering, during which Mr. Marks shuffled himself out of the room.

Another dealer now put up a ten dollar bank, which was bro-

ken on the first deal. The next bank was a twenty-five dollar one, which was also soon broken. By this time it appeared a heavier class of players had entered the place, and to make room for them at the table, the "crabbers" were forced to vacate, by order of Mr. Robbins. One dissatisfied gentleman ventured to remonstrate against the making invidious distinctions, by saying that a gentleman was entitled to his seat, so long as he had a check, but in defiance of this opinion he was seized by the redoubtable Johnstone, and dragged from his chair; after which he spun the unfortunate "champion o' the rights o' the weaker" around the room like a top; a warning beacon to all who had not learned that right is always with the strongest party.

Several banks were successively broken, and as each banker retired discomfited, the cry would arise, "Room for another." "Who next?" The chair was finally occupied by a man clad in an unexceptionable coat of brown cloth, pants of the same material, and a white linen vest. He rejoiced in an elaborately ruffled shirt, and his head was topped by an expensive Panama hat. He was burdened with a superfluous amount of jewelry, comprising a long gold neck-chain, fob-chain, diamond pin, and several diamond rings on his fingers. This gentleman, from appearance, was about forty years of age. His frame was slender, and though not above the middle height, stooped considerably from the shoulders, and ungainly in appearance. His complexion was nearly as dark as that of an Indian, and since I have seen the many Cherokee half-breeds, I am certain he was one of the gamblers of that caste, who made their homes in the Indian Territory. His eyes were dark and piercing, his eyebrows arched and bushy, while his head was covered by a thick shock of coarse black hair. Nobody seemed to recognize him, nor did he speak to any one, so that evidently he was a total stranger in the place. When he had taken from an inside pocket a large roll of bank-bills, he counted out \$300, and handed to Mr. Robbins as his bank money, telling him that he desired the denomination of his checks to be 25 cents. This was considered a very large bank at the "trap," and some of the smaller players began to remonstrate about the price of the checks, which caused some splay conversation between them and those who desired to be considered "heavy rollers," to ensue. Nothing is more annoying to young bank players, or will gall them

worse or more quickly, than to be called "pikers," or "crabbers," or "check-sweaters"—words almost synonymous, and meaning a person who bets one or two white checks at a time; these are termed "pikers" and "crabbers," while the "check-sweater" or "check-charmer" holds in his hand a few white checks, as an excuse to keep his seat at the table, which he does more in expectation of pouncing upon the sleepers belonging to the other players, than of winning anything from the bank himself.

Compared with the banks previously set up, the new one had quite a lively game, none of the previous ones being over \$25. Several \$10 and \$15 bets were made, and a few as high as \$20. The sight of the stranger's money had nerved some of the more adventurous spirits to go for it. Hidden money was brought out of secret pockets, where it had lain "perdu." A new class of players appeared on the scene, more venturesome and better-behaved. Several of the more noisy "crabbers" were driven from their seats to make room for these, and the game now became very exciting.

Among the new arrivals was a tall, powerful man, well, but plainly dressed, and aged about thirty years. His swarthy visage, and dark, sinister expression, was in no way improved by an ugly scar on his forehead and another reaching from his ear to the corner of his mouth. He was accompanied by two stalwart companions, who addressed him as Ned, and who were assisting him, and directing him how to bet his money. It was "Ned, bet on the five—it hasn't lost yet;" or "Ned, cramp the queen with a few dollars—she's a hummer;" or "Ned, put me a couple of dollars on the Jack;" or remarks of like significance. Ned stood before the table with a large roll of bills in his hands, of the denominations principally of ones and twos. When his companions told him to lay a bet, he did so; and when they asked for money, he gave it to them, and did not once open his mouth to ask a question or make a reply. But neither himself nor his friends could pick out winning cards, nor could any other person, scarcely; for the long, bony fingers of the Indian were raking in everything before him in the shape of or of the name of money. The roll of bills in the fingers of "Ned" was rapidly dwindling away, but he still controlled the fiery passion which burned within him, increasing in fury as his losses increased,

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and he saw his bets one after another picked up from the lay-out by the supple fingers of the dealer without a word or sign, until finally he held in his hand the last remaining note of his roll. It was a one dollar bill. As he stood before the lay-out, he twisted this absently into a cord, savagely staring at the automaton dealer the while, whose eyes were on the lay-out, and were covered from the sight of the spectators by the Panama hat, which was slouched over his brows. In this position he patiently awaited the disposal of his last bet by "Ned." "You want this too, do you?" he hissed between his teeth, shaking the twisted bill in his face. "You want this too, do you?" The dealer neither made him any reply, nor moved a muscle; the former continued in the same intemperate manner, still shaking before his face the twisted-up bill. "You've won forty dollars from me without paying me a single bet. See if you can win that, you d—n thief!" At the same moment he placed the bill, twisted as it was, behind the nine. Amidst a death-like silence the dealer made his turn. The cards could be heard distinctly as they fell from the box. Every one seemed to hold his breath.

The bill lost. Ned snatched it up, tore it into small bits, flung one to the imperturbable dealer and one to himself alternately, at the same time hissing between his clenched teeth, "You take that, and I'll take this," at every fragment.

"Your conduct," said the Indian, calmly, for the first time looking up, "is, to say the least of it, very ungentlemanly." Quick as thought, the ruffian seized the dealing-box, and with it struck him a fearful blow on the mouth, which felled him senseless to the floor; while from the cut on his upper lip, caused by the sharp edge of the box, the blood spurted out profusely. Simons picked up the prostrate man, and reseatd him in his chair. The blood was flowing in a stream from his lip, and his first act, on regaining consciousness, was to make a motion to put his hand behind him. Those who observed this movement conceived the idea that he was trying to get hold of a pistol, and the friends of "Ned" called out, "Look out, Ned, he's going to shoot!" That worthy immediately plunged his hand into the bosom of his vest, and as he partially withdrew it, the white handle of a bowie-knife was seen to project, which he immediately replaced on making the discovery that the weapon which

the Indian was trying to draw was nothing more formidable than a white pocket-handkerchief.

At this stage of the affair, several of those belonging to Ned's party rushed in out of the front room with the cry that "the police are coming!" "Let's leave, Ned!" etc. Mr. Johnstone now interfered for the first time, and entreated "Ned" to leave before he was "nabbed" by the police. The room was nearly deserted by the people who a few moments before had crowded them to suffocation, and when "Ned" and his companions had left the place, it contained no other occupants but Simons, Robbins, Johnstone, the injured man, the Major, and myself. This speedy riddance of the crowd was due to a custom of the police, who were in the habit of arresting every person whom they found in a "trap," if called in to suppress a row. The Major, being fully aware of this, tried to drag me from the place as soon as the dealer was struck, but I was determined to see the end of the adventure, and the generous old fellow, sooner than leave me alone, remained with me.

The injured man, unable to make any response to the kind inquiries of Robbins and Simons after his hurts, could only sit with his handkerchief pressed over the wound. Robbins settled up the game, which had won about \$180, and after deducting the ten per cent. due the house, handed over the balance to its owner, who put it in the pocket of his pants, and immediately left the house, holding his handkerchief up to his mouth.

"There, Major! Don't you think we're treated very badly?" inquired the irrepressible Robbins, the instant the door had closed on his retreating form, with his habitual whining tone.

"Yes, sir!" answered the Major, "but I think that unfortunate gentleman who has just left us has been treated an infernal sight worse.

"Treated h—l!" rejoined Mr. Robbins, contemptuously. "What's a fight to breaking up a man's business? An' to be treated so by yer friends too, it's devilish shabby, certain," said the virtuous Mr. Robbins, in a very injured and desponding manner.

"Ned La Grange is as good a feller as ever walked the airth, but yer see, Robbins, he's lost a power o' money here lately, and it makes 'im cross as a b'ar," apologized Mr. Johnstone.

The Major and myself now took our leave, and reached the

street without encountering any officers. "And *that's* what you call the wolf-trap, is it?"

"That's one of them, sir."

"And how many such are here, for God's sake?" I inquired, aghast.

"Ten or fifteen, perhaps," answered the imperturbable Major.

"And are they all as bad as the one we have just left?"

"That's the best of them, sir."

"For fighting, you mean?" I rejoined.

"No, sir! It's kept in better order than many of them; besides, Robbins won't let any "check games" be played in his house, nor any other kind of swindling to go on there."

"And that man Johnstone—is he concerned in the establishment?"

"No farther than that he is hired to keep order there."

"How was it he didn't tackle that fellow, 'Ned'? He talked very warlike to that man they called Grummy, and others."

"Because he knew he couldn't win, and the attempt might have cost him his life. That ruffian, who violated the person of that inoffensive dealer, is one of the worst desperadoes in this city, sir, and his companions are equally as bad."

"I wonder if the person whom he so brutally injured will have him arrested?"

"What would it amount to? Perhaps a fine of five or ten dollars at the utmost, and the ruffian might retaliate upon him, and cause him to be indicted for dealing faro. He wields some influence with the authorities, because he is politically powerful among the rougher characters of the city, known as the Fly Market Rangers, or the Flat-iron Rangers."

The second morning after that on which the above conversation transpired, while the Major and myself were seated at breakfast in our hotel, in looking over the morning paper my attention was attracted to a paragraph which stated that "a well-known citizen named Edward La Grange was found dead a short distance from his lodgings, from the effects of a load of buckshot, which lodged near his heart. On the body, when discovered, was found his watch and other ornaments, and in one of his pockets a small leather pocket-book, containing \$20 in bank-notes. It is believed that revenge prompted the assassination."



"Let's go to the coroner's inquest," said the Major.

We discovered, from an examination of the paper, where the inquest was to be held, and ten minutes' walk brought us to the place. A large crowd of persons were congregated there, but a much larger one before a brick house a short distance off, where, on the pavement in front of it, lay the remains of the murdered man. We managed to work our way into the crowd, and in the ghastly features of the corpse turned up to the noonday sun we recognized those of the "Ned," who, in so dastardly a manner, had outraged the person of the Indian dealer by striking him in the face with the dealing-box. His assassin was never discovered!

#### CHAPTER XXIX.

##### WOLF-TRAPS—CONTINUED.

From 1836 up to 1846 the gambling done in Cincinnati, in the banking line, was almost entirely confined to faro, and the games were conducted, in what were called ten per cent. houses, or, as classically rendered by the masses who patronized them, "wolf-traps," or "dead-falls." After the date mentioned, gamblers began fitting up better rooms for the entertainment of the more respectable class of customers, and shut out from them the rougher characters who were in the habit of making the "wolf-traps" a place of resort. Dens of the "wolf-trap" description were by no means confined to Cincinnati, but were to be found in St. Louis, Pittsburgh, Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, and several of the minor cities. But no city in the Union did they flourish so extensively and in such numbers as that first named, or were the resort of so many ruffianly and lawless characters.

Dens of the description of the "Tapis Rouge," and the "dead-falls" of San Francisco and Sacramento, are now matters of history only, and it seems beyond the bounds of probability that similar haunts of vice, and the brutal and lawless scenes there enacted, will ever again be permitted to disgrace our country, and the name of civilization.

In Cincinnati, the number of traps would increase or decrease

in proportion to the numbers of their patrons; at times as many as fifteen would be flourishing full tilt, while again their number would dwindle down to four or five. During the summer months they were by far the most numerous, owing to the many boatmen in the city thrown out of employment by the closing of navigation on the river.

These delectable institutions were located in close proximity to the steamboat landing; either facing it, or in some by-street convenient. They were to be found in basements, first floors, and third floors, but most generally disconnected from rum-mills. To fit up a "wolf-trap," it would be necessary to procure a room, furnish it with a dozen or so common cane-seat chairs, a faro-table, and a few other trifling articles, and it was ready to receive all comers, always excepting the proscribed sons of Africa. The "nigs," not to be behind their white brethren, had also their "traps," which, to their credit be it said, were conducted on a much more orderly and honorable basis than many of those from which they were excluded. Nor did they retaliate by showing the same spirit of exclusiveness in their dens, for the African and the Caucasian could frequently be seen there, seated side by side, struggling for the possession of the "filthy lucre." Neither did the sable proprietor permit any "check" games to be played, or any other kindred rascalities frequently practiced in the "traps" of their white brethren. The proprietor of the "traps" furnished all the requisite gambling paraphernalia; his money was invested in rent, furniture, and faro-tools only; he rarely or never put up a "snap," nor even played against one. He left that part of the business to his patrons. Whenever one of these put up a bank he looked out for him, or dealt it for him; if the bank won he deducted ten per cent.; if it lost, he charged nothing for his services or the use of his house and tools. When a bank had been broken, the dealing-chair was declared vacant, and waiting for a new aspirant to tempt fortune. The largest bank offered to be set up was given the preference, and they ranged through all amounts from \$1 to \$500, but seldom higher than \$50. Sometimes several persons would unite to stock a bank, and all except the dealer play against it. It frequently happened that, early in the morning, some enterprising individual, wishing to start business for himself, would throw down his dollar and declare that his bank. The proprietor of the

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rooms would then give him checks for the amount, issuing them at ten, five, or perhaps one cent apiece. Presently thirty or forty dollars' worth of checks would be bought and ready to be played against the dollar bank. Possibly it might live all day and win a few hundred dollars, but the odds were several hundred to one that it would speedily give up the ghost. The bank being declared broken, another one was speedily put up in its place, and in this manner was business conducted in these establishments, and the ten per cent. derived from the winning banks amounted in the course of the year to a very respectable revenue for the keepers of these "traps."

These places were patronized by all classes of the community, from the laborer to the sons of the wealthy aristocracy. Tradesmen, mechanics, low politicians, river men, and river sharpers, rowdies and thieves of every description and grade. The verdant who visited these places were objects of prey to many of the rough sharpers, who put every scheme they could devise to work, in order to rob them. Should they put up banks, they could not there, as at No. 98 Barclay Street, New York, "bonnet" and play upon them such jokes as the patrons were accustomed at those places to treat their bankers to. In that locality such high-handed acts of violence were not tolerated, the laws of Cincinnati being so eccentric as to punish such little practical jokes severely. Neither were they here relieved of their money by a two-card box. The pasturage of the "traps" was too thin for that stock. But the rough sharpers of these institutions, when they had a verdant to deal with, managed to get his money by making half turns on him, paying his bets short, and stealing his checks. If too well posted up to stand such nonsense, the game would be dealt with all seeming fairness, taking the chance of winning his money on the square; should this prove unsuccessful, when he passed in his checks, in order to have them cashed, he would be greeted with a laugh by both the dealer and his cappers, and assured that the game was only a lark, and that had he lost his money it would have been refunded to him, or perhaps they might have taken out the price of the drinks and refunded the remainder. But only well-known citizens would get their money refunded in this manner. Should the "sucker" be a stranger, and win, the money he had played in would be taken out by a capper, who would immediately leave the house, carry-

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ing it with him. If the "sucker" continued to win, and showed signs of quitting the game, the dealer would address one of his cronies with a request that he would take his place for a few moments, as he had some very pressing business to attend to. He would then leave the house. Perhaps before doing so he had "pinched" from the card-box whatever money the "sucker" had handed in for checks. He certainly would not make his appearance in the rooms again until the dupe had vacated those premises, unless informed by a runner that he had lost back to the bank his checks. In that case he would leisurely return and resume his place in the dealing-chair. Should the successful "sucker" pass in his checks, he was politely requested to wait until the dealer returned, by the man in the chair. Of course no dealer returned; the cappers would then raise a cry of robbery, and demand the name of the dealer from his representative. That individual of course did not know, nor any one else in the room. All would now be uproar and confusion, in the midst of which some kind-hearted gentleman would whisper in his ear, "Come along o' me; I know where to find 'im, and we'll make 'im pay up." If the poor dupe allowed himself to be lured from the house with his new friend, he would be dragged from one place to another until heart and flesh both were exhausted; and if a stranger, he had long since lost all traces of the house where the game took place. Should he happen to be one of those obstinate "cusses" who could not be induced to leave the premises unless he had at least his own money back, the proprietor would make his appearance, and, after listening to the gentleman's complaint, would refund it to him. Not because he had any right to do so; by no means. "He wasn't responsible for those who came to his house; an' if gentlemen bucked agin the bank, 'twas their business to see that the bank money was all right first. 'Twas as much as he could do to look arter his ten per cent., if it won. But then he didn't want anybody treated mean in his house; he'd sell his furniture before he'd allow that," etc. This apparent sincerity on the part of the proprietor generally smoothed the ruffled feathers of his victim, if he was not too glad to get his money back to know or care what he was saying.

But at times these gentry would find some rather troublesome customers to deal with; and here, by way of a sample, I shall instance a few cases out of many. A deck-hand on a steamer

one night dropped into a trap. A visionary bank was immediately opened for his especial accommodation. After a short play he won forty dollars in checks and passed them in to be cashed. He was informed in the usual way that the dealer having charge of the bank money was out at that moment, and requested to wait for a short time until his return. He waited until the cappers had either lost or passed in their checks, saying, "That's what I owe Mr. Smith, or Jones, or any other hypothetical gentleman," and left the apartment. The deck-hand, having waited about an hour, became convinced that there was no money for him in that crib, and quietly left. On the following night, at about the same hour, he paid another visit to the place, accompanied by about a dozen of his fellow-boatmen. A snap was in progress, but none of the parties engaged were those he had seen on the evening previous; but, without a single moment's hesitation, he seized the card-box, checks, and dealing-box, and was in the act of making off with them, when he was politely stopped by the proprietor, and the requisite forty dollars produced.

The next scene which I recall to mind was one in which an old Kentucky farmer figured as principal actor; having been picked up by some scamp and roped to the den. This old fellow, who was much above the ordinary size of mortals, and possessed the strength of three or four ordinary men, was prone to indulge his leisure hours in tackling the tiger, whenever he found one of those animals lying around loose.

As he entered the "trap" a full game was already under way, having been gotten up for his especial benefit. Feeling kindly disposed to "jine," he handed over to the dealer a Kentucky fiver, and received checks for it, which he soon ran up to eighty dollars, in spite of short-paying, half-turns, and stealing his sleepers. He demanded money for his checks, and was informed by the dealer, after he had counted the checks carefully and put them in the bank, that his "pardner," who carried the bank money, was out, but would be back presently. The old farmer then and there expressed his disapprobation of such a mode of conducting a business, especially a faro-bank; but in order not to render himself disagreeable, resumed his seat to await the coming of the visionary "pardner" with the bank money. Dealer and cappers continued their game, in hopes the

old man would join, but he sat in dogged silence, never taking his eyes once off the door. The dealer now began to think that his absence from the room might be conducive to his personal safety, and addressing a gentleman lounging about, who appeared a mere "looker-on in Vienna," desired him to make a deal for him while he went to see "what the devil had become of his pardner." This obliging person consented, and took the dealing-chair, and its last incumbent made a pass for the door; but, to his astonishment and chagrin, his egress was barred by the stalwart form of the Kentuckian. "Look here, stranger!" he ejaculated, "you can't pass here till I gits my money back, nohow!" at the same time shaking in his face a sledge-hammer fist.

"Yer a d—n fool! ain't I goin' ter get yer money fur ye?" demanded the pretendedly indignant dealer, in reality shaking in his shoes with fright.

"I tell yer ye can't leave this here room till I gits my money," doggedly reiterated the old farmer. Here several of those present interposed, and assured him 'twas all right, that he'd get his money, etc., etc.; but the obstinate old fellow was incapable of listening to such undoubted logic, and persisted in closing the door upon all persons and allowing none to depart until his money was produced. The case was desperate! The dealer saw no solution of the difficulty but to fight it out; consequently he drew off and hit the old man with all the force he was master of, on the side of his head, with his clenched fist. This had no more effect than if it had been a friendly pat on the iron frame of the old Kentuckian, who caught his assailant by the top of his head with one brawny hand, while he "mashed in" his face with the doubled fist of the other, and laid him a senseless heap on the floor. The roughs now joined their forces and pitched into the old fellow in a body, but he made short work of them; a blow from his fist or a kick from his cowhide boot sending them to "grass" in all directions, from whence they soon picked themselves up and sneaked off, until the old farmer was at last left alone in the place, "the monarch of all he surveyed." He then stepped down to the street, hailed a passing dray, and commenced loading upon it the furniture of the room, the gambling paraphernalia, and whatever else he could lay hands on. The row, and the subsequent proceedings of the

old fellow, had gathered around him the usual crowd of curiosity seekers, who were enthusiastically cheering him on in his good work, when, just as the articles were about being hauled away to an auction-room, which was evidently the destination for which the old man intended them, a strange gentleman appeared on the scene and represented that he was the owner of the property, and also affirmed that the dealer had spoken the truth when he said his partner was absent, and that he was himself that person. That he had been detained much longer than he had expected to be, but was now ready to settle all claims against the bank. "Then shell out now!" roared the old farmer. He was finally coaxed to leave the door and come up stairs, to the great indignation of the assembled crowd, where he paid him his money and finally induced him to leave without creating any further disturbance.

John Swann was far up in the fifties, a shoemaker by profession, and had neither wife, children, nor relatives, at least none that his most intimate acquaintance knew of. He was a votary of the green tables, and since those honorable institutions, the "wolf-traps," were first introduced into Cincinnati, had been their constant patron. The greater part of his hard-earned money went to gratify his passion for playing at faro. He was an inoffensive old genius, rather eccentric, and the world thought his intellect considerably impaired. The roughest of the frequenters of the traps respected him, and should any one try to steal his checks from the lay-out, friendly voices were not wanting to warn him, nor friendly hands to see that the old man had his rights. When he got broke, he never hung about the tables, or tried to borrow stakes from any one. He had no associates, was always when on the street entirely alone, and when at play seldom or never spoke to those about him, but talked constantly to himself, and his singular behavior and quaint remarks afforded a never-failing fund of merriment to those around him. Whenever he lost two or three bets successively, he would exclaim, not addressing any one, but merely to himself, "There I go! 'twas a brick to a brick house that card would lose when I staggered up against it." "Stop your wagon, dealer," he would cry out whenever he wanted to make a bet; "more fish in the market." When he had placed his bet to his satisfaction, he would look up into the dealer's face and say, "It's

an apple to an orchard I'll lose that. I feel it, sir! It's fate!" Should the bet win after these exclamations, he would give a low whistle, peculiar to himself, and then cry out, "There, damn me! If Susy wasn't asleep, the strumpet, or she'd never have let me win that bet." "Susy" was the old man's imaginary evil genius, whom he believed the source of all his ill luck, and the torment of his life. Often while the old man would be wending his way homewards, having left his last cent in some of the "traps," he would unceasingly discourse to himself on the topic of his bad luck, and what he intended doing with the faro-dealers when his time should come—a millenium!—which he never entertained the shadow of a doubt. "My day'll come!" he would ejaculate, emphatically shaking his head, "my day'll come, bound to come; I'll win every cent in town, every cent. I'll make them fellows wear summer suits when there's snow on the ground. Damn me if I don't do it, sure!"

The old man's predictions came true at last. One summer for a space of two months he gobbled up two or three snaps a day on an average, and in the transports of his joy he would flourish his spoils in the faces of whatever acquaintances he met in the streets on his way home.

While in the zenith of this streak of luck he happened one night into a trap where the roughs had a "sucker" on the tow-path. Believing everything to be all straight, he bought some checks and pitched in. He soon won out what checks the dealer had, amounting to \$120. Meanwhile the "gull" had lost all his money and left the place. The old man passed over his checks and demanded money for them. The dealer took from the card-box the \$15 he had won from the "sucker," and also the \$5 Swann had paid for checks, and remarking, "I'll be back in a minute, and give you your money," left the place. The roughs sneaked after him one by one, until at last the half-crazed old man was the sole occupant of the place. When he had waited a full hour, and no dealer made his appearance, he began to "smell a rat." "Sold, sartain!" he ejaculated. He picked up the layout from the table, and pinned it to his shoulder, allowing it to hang down his back below his knees, in such a manner that all the cards were in full view, from the ace to the king. He then pitched the checks into the card-box, and placed it under his arm, in such a manner that the brass eagle and thirteen stars might



be seen by every person who passed him. In his other hand he took the dealing-box, and thus accoutred made his appearance on the street. The old fellow was immediately surrounded by a crowd of boys, nearly all of whom were well acquainted with his eccentricities, and followed with unearthly hootings and shoutings of approval, and who, on catching sight of any of their comrades, would cry out, "Come here, boys; old Swann's tuck in a farrer-bank at last!"

It was the last he ever captured. He never gave any reason whatever for the change in his conduct, but was never known to play at faro afterwards, neither did he ever enter a gambling-house.

He persistently refused to give up the tools, though the money due him, \$120, was considerably more than they were worth, and was repeatedly offered him in exchange; but he refused every overture, and swore that untold wealth could not induce him to part with them.

The roughs seldom extracted more than \$100 from any one person, when amusing them with check games or other recreations of that stamp. In fact, such a sum as that would be considered by them a big haul. Of this kind of plunder, twenty-five per cent. went to the house, and the balance being divided up between the dealer and the roper who brought the "gull." They gave to the cappers whatever they pleased. A few of the proprietors of these "traps," like Robbins, would not permit any "check games" to go on in their places, and when a dealer wished to put up a bank, they required him to put up his money in advance, and themselves gave checks for the amount, and, moreover, watched him closely that he did not over-play himself.

But if a "sucker" got into the dealing-chair, every art known to the roughs was put in practice to rob him of his money, and not only "suckers," but the shrewdest of dealers fell victims to their machinations. Their checks would be corked, the horse-hair played on them, or perhaps bets dropped on them, and frequently all three of these artful schemes were put in operation at one and the same time. As many of my readers may not be posted up on the *modus-operandi* of these arts, I will endeavor to describe them, as far as in me lies, for their benefit. It is said that "corking" first originated at the "Tapis Franc," Ann street, New York. I am not in a position to either contra-

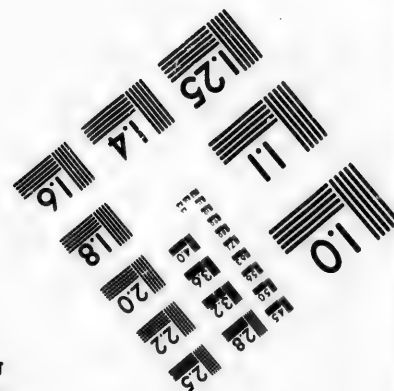
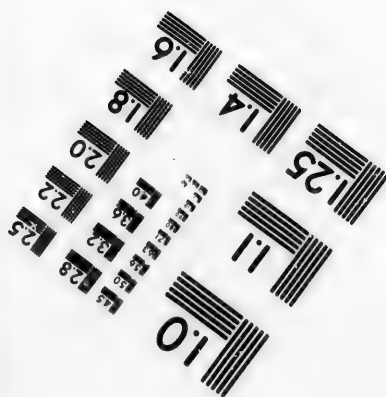
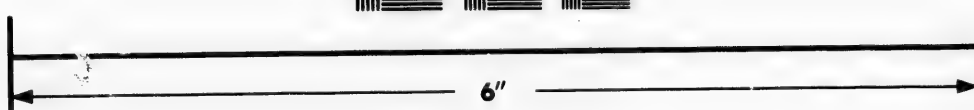
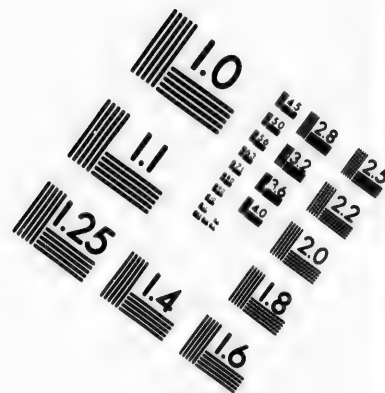
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dict or substantiate that fact, therefore, I shall pass it over. It was, at all events, a very clever device in a rough way to rob faro-dealers. The checks of a faro-bank are generally set up in stacks of twenty each, the different colors being placed separate, and the piles ranged against the side of the card-box, three or four deep. At the present day card-boxes are not in use, and the checks are stacked in piles of twenty each, and placed in little wooden trays, made for that purpose. It has generally been the custom in gambling-houses to leave the checks on the table all night; however, a manipulator may cork a set of checks at any time while a game is not going on, if he desires. It is accomplished by taking ten or fifteen checks from one of the back piles. To hide this theft, a potato or a carrot of the same size as the check in circumference, and precisely the height of the fifteen extracted checks, is put in their place, and the five left in that pile is placed on top of this vegetable or wood, and the deception is perfect. In this manner the checks from four or five of the back piles are abstracted; more often but two or three are stolen, for fear that the taking of too many might lead to detection. The dealer, on opening his game, seeing before him the usual number of stacks of checks, is satisfied, and when the game has gotten well under way, the stolen checks would be played in upon him. Sometimes the thieves around the traps would not give the dealers a chance to win the stolen plunder, but "palm it" to some of their pals and let them get the money for it. On the occasions when this state of things happened, a grand row was the general result if the bank was broken, about the bank over-playing itself, some of the betters having checks and no money in the bank to redeem. If the checks were stacked up the fraud was at once discoverable, from the finding more checks than the piles designated. In "traps" where everything was conducted "on the square," the piles of checks were examined every morning, to make sure that they had not been tampered with in this way; but with those who run their dens on the "grab-all" principle, corking was one of their regular devices for ridding a verdant dealer of his money.

Dropping on a banker is probably coeval with the earliest playing of all games of chance. It is generally done at faro, while the dealer is making his turn. For instance, the operator seats himself in front of the table, and, while the dealer is

making his turn, all eyes being concentrated on the dealing-box to see the result, in the meantime he can drop, unperceived, a pile of checks, coin, or bank-notes behind the three cards nearest him, should he see that neither of these cards is the losing one; thus, by a trick, having a chance to win, and none to lose. Dropping money on games has been practiced successfully upon the shrewdest faro-dealers in this country; but only when they have placed too much confidence in the honesty of those who were guilty of so dastardly a deed. Even the loosest character bearing the name of gambler would hesitate before he perpetrated such an act, knowing it would close against him the doors of every respectable gambling-house where the monstrous meanness became known. Such acts, however, have been and will be repeatedly done by a certain class of outsiders—men, too, moving in good society, who imagine the “besting” of a gambler, no difference by what means, is an able piece of *finesse*, and will add a feather to their caps, instead of being a dishonorable action, reprobated by all right-minded people.

One Doctor Eoyden opened in Philadelphia, in the summer of 1856, a faro-bank with a declared limit of one hundred dollars open. A man named Kelly, a prominent political leader, was playing against the game one night, who was also a man of some wealth. He laid a folded bank-note behind the queen. A young man named Cheatham was dealing at the time; he took up the note, examined it, and found its denomination to be \$50. He then placed it back where it had lain at first; it was won by the bank. Several bets of the same amount were won and lost, until finally the dealer turned for them without examination. On one of these bills losing, Kelly snatched it up, and made a movement in a passionate manner, as if he were going to tear the bill in two pieces between his fingers, but as quickly recovering himself, and acting as if ashamed of his ungentlemanly behavior, threw the bill over to the dealer, who, on unfolding it, discovered it to be a fifty-dollar bill. Twice in succession did Mr. Kelly perform this pantomimic feat. He was a political rowdy leader, and consequently a man of might in the community, and the dealer was obliged to submit to his little eccentricities. On the third time the note won, and on examination, Mr. Cheatham discovered it to be a \$1,000 bill. Cheatham, without saying a word, paid the bet with a stack of red checks valued at \$100.

Kelly insisted on the note being paid in full: the dealer refused. "Pay it d—n quick," roared Kelly, "or I'll get into that drawer and take it." But the bluff failed to have the desired effect; it was not exactly the way to get money from the fiery Cheatham, who could bluff as loud and as long as the best of them, and would have been a dangerous customer from whom to endeavor to force money, in ordinary cases, by intimidation. But in the present instance he had no show; Kelly was above the law in anything he wished to do to a gambler; he started to put his threat into execution by violence, and was only prevented from doing so by the remonstrances of some of his more temperate friends, who pacified him by urging him to await the decision of Doctor Boyden, at that time sick in his room at the International Hotel. Billy Cheatham positively declined to pay any more than \$100, the avowed limit of the bank. "What, pay you \$1,000, you big thief! Why, you've already lost that bill twice, and then snatched it up and put \$50 in its place. Playing a drop game, are ye? Who ever heard of you betting \$1,000 on anything? It'd shake the liver out of ye! At any rate if ye did 'twould be with the expectation of stealing a thousand!"

Billy's tirade here received a check from one of Kelly's followers, who sung out, "Is it Kelly wouldn't bet a thousand dollars? Faith he would that, an' Philadelphia on top av it if the humor seized him, at the toss av a copper."

"Oh! pay the money, Cheatham, d—n it, and don't try to crawl out of it that way," chimed in another friend of Kelly's.

"If he dont, I'll fling the weasen-faced puppy out o' the winder!" roared another gentleman, who evidently contained a considerable quantity of whiskey.

"A nice rooster to cum here and swindle one o' the boys!" bawled another worthy.

"Oh, the devil, Cheatham! pay the money, can't you, and let's go on with the game," chimed in an impatient individual at the table.

"That's right, Billy, what yer turn fur ye've got to pay," was the verdict of another. Not a single voice was raised in favor of the bank, and though several persons were present who would not countenance such a fraud, they prudently held their peace, not daring to express an opinion contrary to that of Kelly and his party.



Cleatham now sent a messenger to Boyden for instructions, who, having heard the particulars of the affair, directed the money to be paid in full and the game to be continued. The result proved the wisdom of his course. Kelly lost back to the bank the thousand dollars of which he had defrauded it, and about two thousand more, and during a three weeks' play the game won about \$10,000.

Having so far digressed, I shall mention another instance of the "drop-game," which occurred in Toledo, Ohio, in 1868. The swindler in this case was one of the best practicing lawyers in the place, moving in the highest circles, and wealthy. In the city was a faro-bank, dealt by a resident gambler, at which he was a constant player, and having been at about that period a loser to a considerable amount, he conceived the idea of getting some of it back, by robbing the proprietor through the "drop-game." The limit of this game was \$50, and he well knew that, even if he succeeded in dropping a thousand dollar bill against it, he could not bully this banker into paying it, in the despicable manner in which Kelly had Boyden. Consequently a few days before putting his game into execution, he borrowed of the banker \$1,000, who, having every confidence in his integrity, loaned it to him without the slightest hesitation, asking for no acknowledgment whatever in return. Shortly after this, while playing at the game, he bet a folded note, which won, and being unfolded proved to be a \$1,000 bill. The dealer offered to pay it with \$50, the avowed limit of his game. The lawyer insisted on payment being made to the full amount of the bill, which the banker emphatically refused. "Then I'll pay myself," retorted the lawyer; "I owed you a thousand dollars, and now I owe you nothing." He excused this outrageous conduct by saying that when he bet the note he did so under the impression that its value was but ten dollars; but that at gambling mistakes went for nothing, and as the bill was turned for without anything being said about its value, the bank was bound to pay the full amount.

Had the dealer, as was undoubtedly his duty, examined the bill before he turned for it, and not have placed so much confidence in men just because they were wealthy and bore the stamp of respectability, he would not have lost his \$1000, and one of his best customers with it.

But, as fashionable novel-writers are fond of saying, "*revenons a nos moutons*," or, to speak more correctly, in this instance, to our "wolf-traps." It was in these that the "horse-hair game" was first put in practice, and successfully played upon the very sharpest dealers who set up banks there, for more than two months before being detected. When "dropping down" on the dealer would not be tolerated, the "horse-hair game" was worked. Neither case-keepers nor cue-papers were ever used in those days, and persons desirous of playing upon case-cards were obliged to tax their memories in order to do so. To play the "horse-hair game" scientifically, required two persons, a full board of players, and many bets on the lay-out. The manipulator took a position in front of the table and played small, until one of the cards near him became "dead." This card he made his base for operating. His "pal," immediately upon its becoming "dead," placed upon it a couple of stacks of white checks, of about twenty each. The operator places behind these, ten or fifteen red ones, to the bottom one of which is attached the end of a horse-hair, the other end being fastened to one of his vest-buttons. For example, we will say that the "dead," or base-card, is the Jack, next it on the lay-out are the ten and queen, and four or five of these cards are still in the dealing-box. Should he see one of these cards come winning, while the dealer is making his turn, and all eyes are concentrated on the cards as they fall from the box, he leans gently back in his chair, and as he does so the movement drags the stack of red checks from off the Jack, taking in the winning card behind it. This trick could be played two or three times during a deal, and on a verdant dealer twice as often. It was finally first detected one day, by a "sucker," who was playing in one of the "traps." He was petrified by the extraordinary spectacle of a stack of red checks creeping slowly from off a card, without any visible means of locomotion. After watching them for a moment in dazed silence, he gave vent to his amazement by bawling out, "Look! look!" pointing at the same time to the traveling checks, "darned if them there checks ain't alive!" It is needless to add that this led to the discovery of the trick.

## CHAPTER XXX.

## SHARP PRACTICE.

The story I am about to relate was considered, some twenty-five or thirty years ago, a good joke. When such frauds were successfully carried out, their perpetrators enjoyed their dishonest gains without the smallest conscientious scruples, and when the secret was discovered, and their nefarious acts exposed to the light of day, the verdict was, "a good joke." The victim of such sharp practice received about as much sympathy from his own brethren in the profession, as from the outside world; the opinion being pretty generally, "served him right, if he couldn't protect himself." But to lessen the offense, or rather to rid such "jokes" from the odium of theft, which somehow would attach itself to them in the minds of foolishly straight-laced people, it was altered to "served him right if he couldn't take a joke!" Alas, for how many a bare-faced robbery has this miserable proverb been the apology! Happily, among the gambling fraternity such sophisms are no longer excuses for committing a fraud, nor can they save the perpetrator from the general condemnation he so richly merits, or the scorn and loathing of his brethren.

In the city of St. Louis, during the summer of 1844, one of these "good jokes" was perpetrated upon a bleary-eyed, lame gambler, who ran a faro-bank in the place. James Ashby was this gentleman's name, and he was the dressiest "cove" in the whole city, and adorned his rather magnificent person with more diamonds than any gentleman—or lady either, for the matter of that—in St. Louis. In addition to the gold and diamonds which decorated his person while limping along the streets, he invariably held in his mouth a massive gold pencil, and as the end protruded beyond the side of his face, a large brilliant flashed back the rays of the sun or the light from the gas-lamps upon all he met, and a handsome gold-headed cane was his constant companion. When the remains of Mr. Ashby were planted beneath the sod, and he was no more seen in the places which lately knew him, cynical and envious persons belonging to his profession were not wanting, who insisted that his demise was

greatly hastened by the enormous weight of jewelry with which he was accustomed to burden himself during his life. Ashby was very generally disliked by the sporting fraternity, as much because of his vanity and foppishness as for his reticent and unsociable disposition. His faro-bank, which had played for the space of two years with more than average luck, had lightened the pockets of many of them, which did not tend to do away with or soften their animosity.

Among those who had played frequently at Ashby's bank, with luck pretty generally on the wrong side, was a humorous genius from Georgia, named Morton, much better known by the sobriquet of "Georgia John." He was considered a good gambler, but his improvident habits, and his inordinate fondness for "fighting the tiger," kept him impoverished. His genial and generous disposition and his many companionable qualities made him a universal favorite with all with whom he came in contact, and from many of them he wheedled checks to gratify his passion for playing against the bank. Although he was generally in the habit of losing his money with the best grace, the frequent scourings which had overtaken him at Ashby's had made him rather peevish, and disposed at times to let fly some of his pungent sarcasms at the devoted head of Ashby, in revenge for his heavy losses. The waspish nature of this latter gentleman was not destitute of the exponent of a sharp tongue with which to parry and thrust, and the consequence was that some by no means gentle bantering took place between himself and "Georgia."

The latter, after one day losing his last dollar against his bank, remarked to Ashby, "If ever I have one-tenth part as much good luck against this cursed bank as I've had bad, I'll send that jewelry of yours kitin' to the pawn-shop, and have you walking the streets like a plucked goose."

"Too much o' the white-washed nigger in you for that, Georgia. You'll never be any account till I own you; I'm certain I shall, some day. All I'm keeping my game open for 's to win you!"

"I s'pose you'll take good care o' me then, won't you?" inquired "Georgia."

"The best in the world," returned his tormentor. "I'll only flog you three times a week, and give you an extra dozen or so Sundays."

From that moment "Georgia's" mind was made up to give Ashby a chance to win him. He made his plan known to a friend who had frequently staked him to play faro, and who was himself a high roller against that highly fascinating institution. This immaculate gentleman was a horse-drover, and also owner of a large farm on the Missouri river, near Lexington in that State. Like the majority of those who trade in that deceptive article, horse-flesh, he was not over-scrupulous as to how he made his money, provided his liberty was not endangered by his transactions. He made frequent visits to St. Louis, and while there, besides attending to his regular business, contrived to spend considerable time fighting the tiger, notably the animal maintained by Mr. Ashby; and the tiger had decidedly the best of the bargain. This gentleman then having a small axe of his own to grind, in the way of getting even with Ashby, consented with alacrity to assist Morton in his plans. He called on Ashby, and informed him he had a likely negro, whom he had raised, and if he wanted to win him at faro at \$500, he could do so.

"Niggers are money," replied that worthy. "Bring him along and let me see him; if he's worth \$500 I'll play for him."

No better delineator of negro character than "Georgia" ever attained celebrity in the annals of burnt cork. He would have made an invaluable "end man." He could imitate every phase of negro character, from the dandified "colored gentleman," down to the lowest field-hand of the southern plantation; he could assume their gait, speech, and peculiarities, until it was impossible for even the negroes themselves to detect the cheat. Having made the acquaintance of some negro minstrels then performing in the city, they fitted him up à *"l'Africaine,"* and when he presented himself before his "massa" for approval, he appeared a regular cotton-field nigger. Eph. Horn himself could not have surpassed him.

"Here's that boy I spoke of, Mr. Ashby; see how you like him?" said the drover, presenting "Georgia" to that gentleman in his faro-room.

Several persons were present at the time, and "Georgia" at once became the centre of attraction, but his disguise was impenetrable. His own mother could not have detected him, so well did he assume the character he represented.

"He's rather short, isn't he?" asked Ashby of the drover, after taking a close survey of the pretended "chattel."

"He's a powerful made boy, an' can do a deal o' work," replied the drover.

"How old is he?" inquired Ashby.

"Twenty-eight years. He was raised on my place, an' I'll ensure him to be sound in every respect," replied the pretended master.

Ashby was seated in the look-out chair during this colloquy, while his dealer was conducting the game for the few persons who were playing. He now turned to "Georgia," and addressed him in somewhat the following style. "What's your name?"

"Jacob, sah! but they calls me Jake fur short."

"Where were you raised, Jacob?"

"On de place, sah! An I cum down de ribber on de stemebote, sah."

"What can you do on a farm, Jacob?"

"Ise knows all 'bout dat, sah."

"But what can you do?"

"Ise chops de wood, an' dribes de cattle, an' makes de rice, plows, dus mos ebryting dey tells me, I dus!"

"Can you wait on a gentleman?"

"No, sah! I dusent knows de gemmens!" replied "Georgia," stupidly scratching his wig.

"Well, I think I'll take a crack for Jacob, anyhow," said Ashby, at the same time requesting his dealer to rise from the chair, that he might take his place. When he had done so, he handed \$500 worth of checks to the horse-dealer, which he bet in a lively tune, at least just as much so as the bank would allow, the limit being \$25 and \$100. The game progressed without a word being spoken by either.

The novelty of seeing a slave played for at a faro-bank was something new and exciting to the bystanders, who watched the game with absorbing interest. The sympathies of the crowd were decidedly with the drover, a fact which could not overbalance Ashby's luck. "The boy's yourn, Mr. Ashby," said the drover, rising from his seat after losing his last check.

Ashby, delighted at his good fortune, leaned back in his seat, looked toward his captured treasure and asked him jocosely how he'd like him "for a master."

"Georgia," who had watched the game throughout with as much interest as if his liberty were really at stake, straightened him-

self up and said, "I'se likes yer berry much, massa. Won't yer give Jake ten bucks ter buy hisself some cloee, so he look nice 'mong de gemmens? I'se knows where dere's a bully suit fur ten dollars, massa!"

Ashby stared at his lately won chattel with blank astonishment, while a titter ran round the room.

"Give you ten bucks?" exclaimed Ashby, who had not failed to see the smiles on the faces of several of his players at Jake's sally, and his temper not being at all improved by it. "That's rich!" he continued, "you impudent black scoundrel! I'll give you ten lashes with a raw-hide."

"You'll have a damn nice time doing it, old sport," retorted "Georgia" in his natural voice, at the same time tearing off his wig and wiping the burnt cork from his face. "Ashby, you said you'd win me, and you've done it now! After me a long time, old boy, but you've got me at last," cried "Georgia," laughing.

The bewildered eyes of Ashby stared at the face of "Georgia" as if it had been the head of the Gorgon. As soon as he had gathered his scattered senses sufficiently to realize the fact that he had been most thoroughly sold, he seized his cane and limped from the room without speaking a single word, while deafening shouts of laughter greeted his ears and pursued him far down the street, nor did he even show himself in public again for a week.

But scarcely three months had passed before Ashby revenged himself upon "Georgia" for the mortifying trick he had played so publicly upon him.

The white "gemmen" had got to behave so rudely at the negro balls, that the "culled aristocracy" decided not to admit them any more, either for love or money. During this ostracism "Georgia" made a bet that he would attend one of them, and, moreover, pass an evening there without being expelled, or in any way interfered with. This wager having reached the ears of Ashby, he concluded that "Georgia," in order to win it, would try some masquerading scheme upon the "nigs," such as the one by which he had been so cleverly imposed upon. He therefore set a spy to watch him, and also called to his aid a free negro, known as "Buffalo Frank." This ruffian was a fireman on a steamer plying between St. Louis and New Orleans. He

was a willing tool in the hands of Ashby, or, in fact, in the hands of any one who would pay him liberally. He would stick at nothing, was capable of committing every crime in the calendar, if he thought he could in any way escape punishment, and could whip everything in the shape of a man in the Mississippi valley.

"Georgia," in the character of a nigger swell, succeeded admirably at the "culled pusson's" ball. He spent his money like a prince, danced gracefully, and made himself generally agreeable to the colored beauties. The flattering reception he received from them, and their evident admiration of the stranger, roused the jealousy of the "bucks," but their extreme politeness in such cases, and the sanctity of the place, would not allow them to show any rudeness to the well-dressed stranger openly, but "Who dat nigger?" "Who es 'im?" "Who knows 'im?" was buzzed about among the colored beaux, but these questions no one could answer. "Georgia" was an unknown. The chances were certainly that he would win his bet, besides having the unbounded happiness of passing an evening in the society of the colored belles; but

"Pleasures are like poppies spread,  
You seize the flower, its bloom is shed."

Buffalo Frank had his eye on "Georgia." He had not lost sight of him for a single moment since his arrival, but he was waiting for him to leave the presence of the "ladies." The moment he withdrew from the ball-room to the refreshment room, Frank seized the opportunity, stepped up to him and inquired, superciliously, "Whar you frum, niggah?"

"Frum de ladies, sah!" returned "Georgia," with his politest bow.

"Yer looks a berry shiney nigger," retorted Frank, contemptuously; "dus yer massa buys dese close, or dus yer steel em?" at the same time rubbing his hand over Georgia's coat-sleeve.

"Look heah, sah!" said "Georgia," indignantly straightening himself up till he reached the height of about five feet six inches, and slapping his breast with his open palm, "Dis chile's his own massa, and buys his own close, and what's more, he's got de sope to do it wid."

"Whar dus ye git de sope?" demanded Frank.



"I'se tears de ribber wide open fur it on de bully Scott," replied "Georgia."

"De bully Scott, hey? Dat's de bote yer on, is it? I'se been lookin' fur some o' dat bote's niggers some time," said Frank, at the same time giving him a stunner under the eye that sent him sprawling on the floor, where he gave him a most unmerciful kicking and thumping. Through the interference of some of the "bucks," he managed to make his escape, almost in rags, with the loss of his hat and wig.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

### LEXINGTON RACES.

About a week after our arrival in Cincinnati, the Major one morning introduced me to a gentleman by the name of Mr. George Roberts, a resident of Lexington, Ky. Mr. Roberts was a mixed gambler, a man of means holding property in Lexington, and a person of some importance there. He was about forty-five years of age, married, and was the father of several grown-up children. He speculated in slaves, horses, and mules, droves of which he took each winter to the New Orleans market. He called himself a lawyer, though he never practiced at the bar, and took an active part in the local politics of his place, and an interest in any faro-bank which happened to strike his fancy and where he thought there was some money to be made. He was fond of racing, and had at various times owned some good race-horses, did not object to taking a hand at poker or brag if he found an easy game, and had a pugnacious disposition for fighting the tiger. Otherwise he was a peaceably inclined, mild-mannered individual enough. He was, in fact, in for anything to make money, an article for which he entertained the most unbounded reverence; but had still so great a regard for his reputation, that he would not for the world that there should become attached to it the odious name of gambler, and whenever he took stock with members of that profession in their business, it was with the express understanding that his connection with them should be strictly under the rose. The Major and

himself were acquaintances of long standing, and he had more than once been secretly concerned with the former in a faro-bank at the city of Richmond, which he visited occasionally during the summer months to purchase slaves for the southern market.

Mr. Roberts was anxious that the Major and myself should try our fortune in the city of Lexington, where, he informed us, no faro-bank existed at that time, but material in plenty for successfully building a good game. Added to these encouraging facts, the races would commence there in a few weeks, and would of course draw many strangers from all parts of the surrounding country. "I will take a third interest in your bank, play against it myself, and also introduce to the game many valuable players; but under no circumstances must it become known that I am in any way concerned in the business." Upon being reminded by the Major that faro-dealers had on divers occasions received pretty rough treatment at the hands of the Lexington authorities, he answered, decisively, "Have no fear about that; you attend to your faro-game, and I'll stand between you and all harm." On the strength of this assurance, and the flattering prospects he opened before us, we concluded to start for Lexington on the following morning, whither Mr. Roberts promised to follow us within two or three days, at the farthest. He furnished the Major with an introductory letter to a Mr. Baxter, of Lexington, who he assured us would render us every assistance in his power in procuring a suitable room, furnishing it, and getting things in train generally.

Arriving in Lexington, we found Mr. Baxter everything he had been represented. He procured for us a room in the most desirable location in the city, caused it to be properly cleaned and fixed up, and then bought for us such furniture as we required, all of it second-hand, but good and substantial; and after our establishment, which contained but a single room, was fitted up and arranged for the reception of our friends, our entire outlay did not exceed two hundred dollars. By the time we were ready to open our game, Roberts had returned, and handed us one thousand dollars as his portion of the bank money. He promised he would introduce to us what gentlemen faro-players he was acquainted with, and would also himself play against the game, and that his play should be a legitimate one. He also ad-

vised us to pay no attention to whatever stories we might hear concerning interference by the authorities, but to place implicit confidence in him, as he should take measures for ensuring our protection.

Lexington, though but a small town, contained many faro-players, some of whom were members of the most respectable families in the place, and who, as soon as they ascertained a bank had been set up, called and paid their respects to us, so that we did not want for customers. Mr. Roberts, as he had promised, introduced several valuable ones, and himself played at the bank, in order to encourage his friends to do so, but small, and in the course of a week's time lost three hundred dollars. We opened our game generally at about two o'clock, P. M., closed it for supper, and afterwards run the bank until one or two o'clock in the morning. If none of our patrons brought to our bank large sums, they came often and frequently if the bank was able to beat them, and they showed no ill temper because of their losses, nor hung growling round the tables after they got broke; nor were we ever bothered by any such characters as the frequenters of the "wolf-traps" in Cincinnati.

As the time for the races drew near, our business rapidly increased, and, as the Major was obliged to divide his attention between our business and the different stables of racers, which were now constantly arriving, and cultivating the acquaintance of noted turfmen, I was compelled to secure the services of a young gentleman resident of the city to assist me in conducting the game. Even Roberts was no longer seen in our place, but this did not strike me as anything strange, his services being no longer required. While building up the game, and so long as his aid was needed, he had done everything in his power to help us, but now that our business had gotten fairly established, his visits grew less frequent.

Among the many introduced to us by Mr. Roberts, was one Col. Bowles, of Baltimore, who had on the race-track a stable of horses. He was a turfman, attended all the race-meetings throughout the South and Southwest with his horses. Wherever he could, he made it a point to secure the gambling privilege on the race-track, and had engaged it for the present meeting on the Lexington course. In this gentleman's train, besides his trainers, rubbers, riders, and racers, there followed a gang

of the lowest sharpers, who were in those days in the habit of infesting race-courts, fairs, etc. This small army, numbering more than twenty persons, was composed of strap-players, dice-coggers, thimble-riggers, marked-card "vingt-et-un" dealers, snap roulette players, and their cappers. The Colonel, as I have before mentioned, was accustomed for a certain sum of money to secure the exclusive privilege of a course, where he placed his worthy retainers, each to ply his special vocation. He furnished to each a table and a certain sum of bank-money, with which to make a show, nothing more, for at one of these tables the only earthly chance a greenhorn would have to make a winning, was to snatch what money was in sight, and thrash the operators and their cappers and make off with it, and none but greenhorns ever played at these games. The busiest moments of Col. Bowles' existence were during a race-meeting. Besides the care of his trainers, rubbers, riders, and race-horses, he was obliged to watch his sharpers to see that they did not "sink" on him. "Knocking down" on their "pals" was a regular part of the vocation of these gentlemen, and well was the Colonel aware of it. He had secret spies set upon them during their labors, who reported to him their every suspicious movement, and should he find any of them not willing to "rake square," he would fall upon the unlucky wight with a heavy hickory cane, which was his constant companion; but having a hard set to deal with, in his frequent encounters he sometimes got hold of a customer a little too tough for him, and came out of the *melée* decidedly second best. At the time of which I write Col. Bowles was an entire stranger to me except by name, and I was perfectly ignorant both of his character and his method of doing business, as was also the Major. He was a short, heavy-set man, rather inclined to corpulency, and though far up in the fifties, looked younger. His stumpy bandy-legs supported a powerful frame, while poised upon a short, thick, red-looking neck, which barely protruded above a pair of broad, round shoulders, was a large bullet-shaped head. His big round face contained a pair of small restless black eyes, which seemed to be watching everything and everybody at the same time. His face was deeply pock-marked, besides being otherwise cicatrized by several ugly scars, the relics, doubtless, of some of those encounters into which his ungovernable passions were constantly

leading him. The garments of the Colonel were of the richest material, but "horsey" in the extreme—a style much affected at that period by the more ignorant class of turfmen. In the ornamental line a fine brilliant sparkled in his ruffled shirt-bosom, and another adorned the stumpy little finger of one of his coarse hands, and a heavily embossed gold fob-chain, with a ponderous seal attached, dangled against his thigh. In his hand he constantly carried the highly polished hickory cane before mentioned, adorned with a golden head. When seated, this weapon or ornament, for I am ignorant in which light it was viewed by its possessor, rested between the legs of the Colonel, and when he slept was close to his pillow. Few men have a more exalted opinion of their own standing and worth than had Col. Bowles. He knew everybody and everything, whether worth knowing or not, and had the most contemptible opinion of everybody poorer than himself. His manners were coarse and repulsive, and towards those whom he considered his inferiors, pompous and overbearing in the extreme, while to the wealthy or influential he was cringing and obsequious. His language, which, to say the very least, did not smack of the drawing-room, was garnished by a profusion of oaths and not a few obscene expressions. He was completely versed in the various qualities of negroes, horses, dogs, and knew the several rules appertaining to cock-fighting, horse-racing, and card-playing, by heart, and whenever a discussion on any of the subjects arose where he was present, the Colonel was in his glory and monopolized the conversation, till, to use an old-fashioned expression, "no one could get a word in edgewise."

Although so entirely dissimilar in natures, manners, and habits, an intimacy to me unaccountable sprung up between Col. Bowles and Major Jenks, perhaps because I had taken a dislike to him upon his first introduction to our place, and had seen nothing upon closer acquaintance calculated to soften or eradicate my boyish prejudices. He monopolized the most of the Major's—I was about to say, leisure hours—but I shall speak more correctly when I say the most of the Major's time, for it seemed as if that chivalrous gentleman had not a moment reserved to himself except when he slept. As to the bank and myself, we no longer seemed to occupy any place in his thoughts, and the only time I enjoyed his society was while seated at our meals, at the

of the richest much affected at en. In the ordered shirt-bosom, one of his coarse with a ponderous hand he confidently mentioned, a weapon or otherwise viewed by its l, and when he a more exalted ad Col. Bowles. rth knowing or everybody poorer repulsive, and s, pompous and ay or influential e, which, to say m, was garnished with expressions. ties of negroes, taining to cock- t, and whenever he was present, he conversation, could get a word

ners, and habits, reen Col. Bowles a dislike to him ad seen nothing or eradicate my of the Major's— speak more cor- for it seemed as reserved to him- nd myself, we no hts, and the only our meals, at the

hotel table. Col. Bowles had no appetite unless he occupied the chair by the side of the Major, and in these happy moments he entertained his friend with the pedigrees of celebrated race-horses; the qualities of fine breeds of dogs; his wonderful exploits on the turf, in the cock-pit, and at the gaming-table. The Colonel always figured as winner in these tales; at least he never figured in any other role in any of them, except that of a victorious hero. His field of operation had been confined entirely to the Southern States, of whose productions and people, their manners, habits, and wealth, he had the most unbounded and minute knowledge. But from this generous and chivalric race he had sought as associates but a few of the wealthiest, most renowned and powerful, who were either lordly planters, the owners of untold acres and thousands of slaves, or men holding high political positions, whose confidence he had won by his fascinating qualities as companion, his incorruptible honesty, and his wonderful brains. "Why, damn me, Major," he would exclaim, getting enthusiastic on his subject, "if there ain't Judge Kleper, o' Charleston, that 'ud put up his last nigger every time on my mar' Molly Spiker, if I told 'im to go it!" The Colonel's words may be written down, but his tone and manner defy description. Again and again at the dinner-table were the ears of the Major, and everybody present besides, regaled with the history of the celebrated main of cocks fought by himself and General Simpkins, of Georgia. The match was for \$25,000, and a \$1,000 bet on each fight, fought between Georgia and South Carolina. "One o' ther greatest victories ever heard on, Major! Damn me if I don't think a million dollars changed hands on 't!" It is quite probable that the Colonel had told this story so often that he really believed it himself, like the convict in the Missouri State's prison, who, during his five years' incarceration in that delectable institution, had been in the habit of telling his fellow prisoners that he had deposited in the State Bank of Missouri, \$10,000. Having regained his liberty, he immediately made for St. Louis, drew a check for the amount, and proceeded to the bank mentioned, and presented it to the paying-teller, without a doubt that it would be honored; he had become so sure, from the constant repetition of the story, that it was true.

"Jack, Col. Bowles desires to take an interest in our room. He will place Mr. Smiley in it to assist, and between them both

they will take one-half the game. The races commence on Monday, and we shall have a heavy play during the week, and may very probably be compelled to open another bank; therefore you see it will require more labor, and also more capital to carry on the game, than we have got. Mr. Smiley is an agreeable gentleman, and capable of getting along smoothly with the crowd of players we shall probably have to entertain."

These remarks were addressed to me by the Major one day, before the hour at which we generally opened our game, and when no one was present but ourselves. The Mr. Smiley alluded to was a tall, sickly, modest-looking individual, extremely reticent and unsocial in his manners, and seemed to care for no one on earth but himself. Though an attaché of Col. Bowles, he seldom paid him, or in fact any one else, the customary recognition required by courtesy from one acquaintance to another. The bond which bound this worthy couple together was at that time a subject of some speculation to me, but I finally gave it up as a mystery beyond my solution.

Though prepared for receiving from the Major at all times the most whimsical and ridiculous suggestions, the present proposition somewhat startled me; but without showing any feeling upon the subject, I quietly asked him if he had said anything about it to Mr. Roberts.

"No, sir," he answered, with some slight asperity; "I've not seen Mr. Roberts for more than a week."

"Have you forgotten, sir," I continued in the same quiet tone, "that he owns one-third of this game, and that it is under his protection?"

"I have learned, sir, that his protection is powerless, and our game would have been broken up long ago had it not been for the influence of Col. Bowles with Mr. Dawson, the City Marshal. He has more weight with that gentleman than fifty Roberts. No, sir, we want no dead-head in our game any longer. He's no benefit to us, none at all; so let's settle up the game and give him his money. The Colonel will protect our game, if it needs protection, which is unlikely, and put up his money, and don't want any one to do his work for him. He's the man we want, not Mr. Roberts."

"I can now see," I said, "what I was somewhat at a loss to determine before, why the Colonel has been so very attentive to you, Major."

"I suppose, sir," said the Major, reddening up considerably, "you know what you're talking about?"

"Perfectly well, Major; and I will also let you know, if you will listen to me, in a very few words."

"Very well; go on, sir," exclaimed the Major, in his most dignified manner.

"The Colonel saw that we had built up a valuable game, and is now anxious to get a share in it. He was here before we came, had money and a faro-dealer at hand. Now, why didn't he open a game for himself? Either he was afraid of the interference of the authorities, or that he could not get players. Now, I don't think, after coming here under the auspices of Mr. Roberts, and entering into partnership with him, it would be fair to declare him out of the game just at this moment, when it's well built up and likely to make more money than it has ever before; and it's more than likely he won't stand any such treatment. I have no more interest in this room than I want, and I'm not going to give one cent of it away to Colonel Bowles, or anybody else."

The Major was not prepared for such opposition to his pet scheme. Though his face reddened with anger, and he moved uneasily in his chair, he restrained himself by an effort, and proceeded to try what effect a little persuasion would have on me. "Why, my dear Jack, Colonel Bowles is a man of wealth and honor! He is known far and near as a noted turfman and sportsman. His friendship alone is worth a fortune to any gambler. He has the influence requisite to place you in moneyed circles, where you can make a fortune in a year; such opportunities, sir, a man seldom meets with twice in a lifetime. Now, sir, Mr. Roberts, whom I know well, cares for nobody but just himself; he knew there was a faro-game here and no one to deal it; we answered his purpose as well as any, so he brought us here, as he would have done any others whom he found as capable of assisting him to work up a good game as we. He has not been near us for more than a week, and he is of no benefit to us whatever, that I can see, and I don't feel disposed to work for such a man; besides, sir, he has deceived us by telling us he was able to protect us, when such was not the case. Our game would have been broken up some days ago, had it not been for Colonel Bowles, sir!"

"I hope, Major," I replied, "that you have not so far forgotten



yourself as to tell Colonel Bowles that Mr. Roberts is interested with us, or that he is protecting our game, after his particularly requesting us not to do so!"

"I have never so far forgotten myself, sir, as to commit an ungentlemanly action," replied the Major, in his stiffest manner. "I never betray confidence, sir! Mr. Roberts' secret is his own, not mine to give away."

"Pardon me, Major, but when you spoke of Colonel Bowles having kept the Marshal from breaking up our game, and said that Mr. Roberts was unable to protect it, I feared that you had unguardedly mentioned to the Colonel the relations existing between ourselves and Mr. Roberts."

"I have not, sir," rejoined the dignified Major. "Have never mentioned the name of Mr. Roberts in the presence of Colonel Bowles. The latter gentleman casually mentioned to me, some days ago, that Dawson, the Marshal, had spoken to him about our rooms, and said it was his duty to close up our game, and was only prevented from doing so by the representations of the Colonel, who exerted all his influence, and finally wrung from him his consent to allow us to go on until the termination of the races, providing no complaints were made against us by any of the citizens. Now, Jack, my boy," he continued, "you see just how matters stand. Because you dislike Colonel Bowles, you shouldn't stand in your own light; he's a kind-hearted man, and has on several occasions spoken very kindly of you; he says you certainly have talents, and all you want is good pilotage. Don't treat his advances cavalierly! he is powerful, can make and unmake, and the friendship of such men is not so easily gained, that one may cast it aside at will for a mere boyish prejudice. Another opportunity like the present may never again occur, sir, and I beg of you, Jack, don't throw it away if you have the slightest respect for the opinion or good wishes of Major George Jenks."

"Major, I don't like Colonel Bowles, that's true; but I have seen such men as he is before, and, with all due deference, allow me to say that I believe you are his dupe, just as you were that of Simpson and McGovern. Men don't show such violent friendship for one another on short acquaintance, unless they have got some purpose of their own to serve in doing so. I certainly think Colonel Bowles has got a large bundle of private and particular

axes to grind for himself in all the suggestions he is making for your and my government, and that of our game. How do you know whether he is telling you the truth, when he says Dawson wanted to break up our bank? You have nothing but his word for it. I don't believe Mr. Roberts would leave his money in this bank if there existed the remotest danger of it's being raided; he's too sensible a man for that. Didn't he warn us to believe no stories we might hear, but to rely on his protection? As far as Colonel Bowles' wealth and influence are concerned, I don't believe it will ever benefit us in the smallest degree and on one thing I am determined, and that is that he is not going to interfere with me or my business. I am now going to Mr. Roberts' house, and to see if I can find him, and if, when he understands the nature of your proposition, he is willing to accept it, I shall draw out of the game, and you and I, Major, must part company."

With flushed cheeks and angry brow the Major rose from his chair, and said, in a cold, calm voice, accompanied by one of his most polished bows, "Let the matter rest where it is, sir! I shall explain your objections to Col. Bowles, and that will be quite sufficient, sir! He imagined, when he offered to take an interest in our business, that he was doing us a favor by lending us his countenance and protection, and I can assure you, sir, I thought the same myself; but, sir, as your wisdom chooses to see the matter in quite a different light, I beg that you will forget that we ever had the subject under discussion." Having closed his speech with the greatest politeness and dignity, he threw his cane under his arm, as was his custom when irritated, and, with the stride of a Roman senator, left the room.

Immediately he left the place I started for the residence of Mr. Roberts, with the purpose of learning from him exactly how far we might rely on his protection, and to inform him of the reported threats made by the City Marshal, but under no circumstances did I mean to let him know of the proposition for so unceremoniously turning him out of the business—a regard for my old friend, as well as policy, forbidding me from broaching the subject. On reaching the house I was informed by the servant who answered my ring that Mr. Roberts was in Cincinnati; had been gone already five days, and was not expected back before the next Saturday night. It was now Thursday, and the races

would commence on the following Monday. The absence of Mr. Roberts, the strange indifference he had shown of late regarding our business, the fact of his leaving the city without even coming to apprise us of his intention, together with the present aspect of affairs, all conspired to arouse within my bosom for the first time angry feelings towards the absent gentleman. Had it not been for the little misunderstanding between the Major and myself, and the information which he had obtained from Col. Bowles about Mr. Dawson, the City Marshal's wish to wipe out our bank from the soil of old "Kentuck," I dare say I should never have thought of anything of the kind; but as it was, my mind became the prey of anxious thoughts, and I felt a strong presentiment of coming evil, which, however it might then lack reason, proved not to be groundless in the future, as events will show.

On the morning following our conversation just related, while the Major and myself were at breakfast in our hotel, Col. Bowles approached the former with an air of the greatest mystery, and whispered in his ear, "Sorry to disturb you, Major, but the fact is, I've heern sunthin' I thought you oughter know." In order to give his words their full effect, he seated himself on a chair next to the Major, and having comfortably arranged himself, he put up his hand to the side of his mouth and said, in a low, mysterious voice behind it, "There's sunthin dark. out, sure! sunthin rotten!" and as he spoke, he divided his attention between myself and the Major, looking first towards one, and then towards the other. It was the very first time he had ever deigned to notice me, although I had been thrown frequently into his company, both in our hotel and in the gambling-room, but he had always studiously ignored my presence. I believed him to be a vain, arrogant, and selfish man, and, withal, a lying blatherskite, and these causes had induced a strong dislike in my mind towards the man, which was not, to say the least, in any respect lessened by the indifference with which he always treated me, for it is the nature of youth to sooner forgive a serious injury than a slight.

"Why, what do you mean, sir?" demanded the astonished Major, turning round in his chair and gazing inquiringly into the peck-marked face of the Colonel.

"I tell you, Major, there sunthin rotten, as sure as my name's Jack Bowles."

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"Good gracious! What do you mean, sir?"

"When we parted last night, you know"—the Major nodded to intimate that he did know—"wall," continued Bowles, "I jist steps inter Gilp's coffee-house, an' thar I come across ole Myers, the District Attorney. He's a dirty ole rogue, mind I tell you now, Major, and when Jake Bowles tells you he knows a man, go your money on it!"

"Yes, Colonel, I understand. But what took place?" inquired the Major, becoming alarmed.

"Wall, yer see me an' ole Myers we got ter talking about ole times, an' occasionally hoisting in some groceries, which kinder warmed up the ole cuss a little, an' its then yer kin git a little truth outer them sly old ones. Wall, at last he asked me about you, and who yer was, an' what yer was a dewin on down thar in yer rooms every night. He went ter work in a devilish quiet way at fust, just as if he didn't care a d—n fur what he was a talkin' about, but I saw mighty quick that thar was sunthin behind. I tole him you was a respectable gentleman from Richmond, thet you was here to 'tend the races, and how the boys played poker of a night in yer room. He sorter cut me short off here at this p'int, and said that fero was played there a d—n sight oftener than poker, an' then he cums right out an' shows his hand. Says he, 'Look a here, Bowles,' says he, 'I'm a friend o' yourn, an' wish yer well, an' if yer've got anything to do with that there crib, git outer it, cos several religious persons has made complaints about it; they say young men go thar an' lose thar money; an' dooty is dooty, yer see, Bowles, an' I can't shirk it, nohow!'"

"Great God!" cried the Major, excitedly springing to his feet.

"Let's pack up and get away from here, Jack! I wouldn't be arrested here for the damned infernal State!"

"Pretty good State, too," remarked the Colonel, seeming to enjoy the Major's uneasiness hugely.

"Yes!" retorted the irate Major, "so damned good, sir, that they ought to put a stone fence around it, to prevent anybody from getting into it. Come on, Jack, let's pack up and leave! We can't be too quick about it!"

"Now hold on, Major! don't fly off at the handle. When Jake Bowles is a friend to a man, yer kin go yer life on him! Let me work this here business. I don't believe it's es bad as yer think,

by a d—n sight," said the worthy Colonel, with a knowing wink. "Ole Myers, he's working fur a palm, he's h—l on money, and I believe that's his game. I understand these matters, Major, better 'n you do, and you jest let me manage 'em. He can't pull yer himself, the ole cuss; Dawson does that there, and he's mine, the best friend I've got in the world; and if he has to pull yer, he'll let me know time enough to git yer out of the way safe and sound, bet yer life on 't. You trust ter Jake Bowles, Major, not bad stock, I tell yer! So you jist keep cool 'till I see yer again." With which admonition the Colonel deprived us of his fascinating society. The Major was in no frame of mind to heed advice to keep cool. On the contrary, he worked himself up to the boiling point, and fumed, and raged, and cursed the whole State of Kentucky, and everything which grew upon its soil. Roberts came in for a double share in his denunciations. "The infernal scoundrel, sir, to decoy a gentleman among thieves and then abandon him! I'll give the sleek-tongued knave a piece of my mind when we meet him! Let me get back to Virginia once more, and if ever I leave there again, may I never get back alive." I was too wise to put myself within the circle of the whirlpool of his wrath by making any suggestion, even had I been capable of offering any, which I was not. The whole matter was, from beginning to end, a muddle to me, and the only likelihood of a solution which I could perceive was the presence of Mr. Roberts. Much as I distrusted Col. Bowles, and unscrupulous as I believed him to be, it never once flashed across my mind that he was playing us a very dirty trick, and the interest he was showing in our affairs I looked upon as a sort of freemasonry existing among gamblers, which made it arbitrary upon them to protect each other against all outside danger, regardless of their petty slights or professional jealousies. I tried to appear as calm and unconcerned as I could before the Major, but the fiend Uneasiness was tightening his hold upon me. I recalled the frequent jokes of some of our players, who, while I was dealing faro for them, would say, "Old Dawson would make a dive in upon us when we least expected it some time." I also recollected the stories I had heard them relate, of gamblers having their tools burned before the court-house door, and the owners being locked up until their last dollar was leached from them by rascally officials. The iron-barred doors and windows of the Lex-

ington jail, which I have so often viewed from the street with such supreme indifference, now loomed darkly before my imagination, like some fabulous monster ready and waiting to devour me.

Before the sounding of the bell for dinner, the Colonel again met the Major, with an exultant look upon his pock-marked countenance. "I've fixed it all right, Major; kick right along! As long as Jake Bowles is around yer all right, bet yer life on 't!"

"But what security have we? Tell me that," demanded the excited Major.

"Neow, Major, when a feller talks on ticklish subjects with yer big guns, he's got ter keep his jaw closed about it. I've whipped my horse to his full speed, ole boy, an' 'twouldn't do to tell tales about it outer school. But I'll tell yer this much, yer shan't fall inter nobody's clutches; I've throwed the flag down on that, bet yer life on 't. If ole Myers should make a dive for ye— an' he's mean enough to do anything—I'll know it in time ter get yer outer the way. Trust Jake Bowles fur that," said that gentleman, tipping the Major one of his most knowing winks. The latter thanked the Colonel for the deep and active interest he had taken in his affairs, but positively refused to approach near the faro-room while his liberty was menaced, as he styled it. I told him that if we ever expected to open our game again, it should be done now, for if we closed, our patrons would be taken with a scare, and we should lose them. I told him I should go right away and attend to business as if nothing had happened. He answered me, "Do as you please, sir, but I shall not go near the room." Up to this period our bank had been about \$3,000 winner. I went over to our room, where I found a crowd of players awaiting my coming and the opening of the game, and when I had done so a very lively play ensued. During the afternoon several strange faces were seen at the table, and more money shown than at any time during our stay in the place before. I closed my bank about supper time, some \$2,200 winner. We were in luck.

Not finding the Major outside the hotel, nor yet in the office, when I went over, I went up to his sleeping-room, where I found him with his trunk all packed. "I have paid our bill, sir," was the first greeting I received, "and you had better attend to your luggage, and let us be prepared in case of the worst."

"Has it come to that, Major?" I asked. "Must we leave?"

"I don't know as yet, but it is well to be prepared for every emergency, sir."

"If we should be obliged to leave, how are we to arrange about our gambling-room, sir?" I inquired.

"I have settled that matter," he replied in his most dignified tone, for ever since our little misunderstanding he had shown a decided coolness towards me.

"How?" I asked with some interest.

"I have sold the room and furniture to Col. Bowles for \$200, and have given him a receipt for that amount. Should we be obliged to leave, he will sell what furniture, etc., is there, and remit the money to me."

"But what in such case do you intend doing with Mr. Roberts' share of the bank money? To-day our game has won \$2,200."

Without evincing the smallest surprise or pleasure at my news, the Major replied, "Had Mr. Roberts done his duty by us, sir, we should not now be in this trouble, probably. Should we have to fly, we can, on reaching a place of safety, write to him, sir, and you need have no uneasiness, sir, about his putting in an appearance when we have so much of his money in our hands."

Fear had taken full possession of the Major, and from him I caught the infection. I repaired to my room and packed my trunk, and soon after joined him at the supper-table. During the meal I made several efforts to draw him into conversation, but my attempts were met by a dogged silence which I sought in vain to dissipate, and only succeeded in making him more gloomily indifferent than ever to all my advances.

The night, which was one of the last in October, had barely cast its sable mantle over the city of Lexington, when we rose from our seats at the table and entered the office of the hotel. We were instantly confronted by Col. Bowles, who was evidently waiting our advent with some impatience, and who immediately rushed up to us, and in a low voice exclaimed, "Git up an' git."

"Good God! explain yourself, sir!" ejaculated the Major.

"Hush! we can't afford ter let ennboddy hear us; thar's no time for cheek; let's git outer this here fust. Is yer baggage ready?"

"Yes," stammered the terrified Major.

"Order it down; I'll be here with the wagon in a minute."

It took me only a few minutes to run across to the gambling-room and put the gambling-tools in my valise. When I had again reached the hotel, I found my trunk standing beside that of the Major's, on the sidewalk in front of the door. A powerful pair of gray horses harnessed to a light spring road wagon were standing there, and our luggage was placed in this conveyance by order of the Colonel. Having bestowed on the negroes who had performed this ceremony a few small coins, he whispered to the driver, "Drive to Fall's Corner and wait for us thar." The wagon having driven off, he turned to the Major and myself and said, "Let's get along; we've no time to lose."

## CHAPTER XXXII.

## THE FLIGHT.

We had walked rapidly for about eight blocks, when we came in sight of the wagon which contained our baggage, waiting for us on a street corner opposite a large lumber-yard. The place seemed deserted and almost in the suburbs of the city.

"Now," said the Colonel, halting before the wagon, "I'll tell you what's ther matter, an' I've got but little time to do it in, either, cos I want yer to git a good start o' ther cusses, do yer mind?" The Major did mind, and so in fact did I, for we were both devoured by a voracious curiosity to know what had caused this hasty exodus after the very cheering view of the case which the worthy Colonel had given us but a few hours previously. "A little before dark," continued that gentleman, "I got a message from Dawson ter come an' see 'im. I done so, an' he told me that Myers had gin a warrant ter ther Sheriff ter pull you. Now yer see, the Sheriff's allers been down on gamblers, an' ole Dawson, he ain't; he's allers let up on 'em when he's had a chance, and that's jist the reason Myers didn't give him the warrant as he oughter done. The Sheriff, he wanted ter pull yer this afternoon; but Dawson, when he calls on him to assist, staves him off with the excuse that if they wait 'till night ther house 'ud be full, an' they could make a big haul. Pretty cute fur ole Dawson, warn't it? But he's my friend, an' you know I



told yer if enny danger was about he'd let me know. Well, him and the Sheriff's agreed ter pull yer all ter night when yer game's under full headway, an' they kin nab everybody in the room an' so have no difficulty in gittin' witnesses agin yer. Es quick es Dawson gin me the word, I jist sent fur Jim here, that's goin' ter drive yer down, an' tole him ter hitch up my road team an' drive yer ter Louisville. So yer parceive when ther Sheriff goes ter make his dive fur yer, I'll have yer close on ter Frankfort. I've tole Smiley ter see that yer gamblin'-room's all lighted up, ter make 'em b'lieve yer there yit. D'ye see, Major?" chuckled the Colonel.

"What a wonderful escape we've had from the clutches of those villains! And how can we ever be sufficiently thankful to you, sir, for the deep interest you have taken in our affairs?" ejaculated the Major, seizing the hand of his benefactor, and in the heat of his gratitude trying to wring it off.

"Now don't talk that way, Major, ole boy; I can't stan nun o' that; what I've done I did fur a gentleman, an' that's enough; an' ef I didn't think you'd do jist the same fur me ef I was in a tight place, I wouldn't a done it; so git inter the wagon, ole boss, cos I don't feel right nohow es long's yer here. I tell yer what, the Sheriff's h—l when he gits started; an' when he finds out ye've fooled 'im, he'll wade through fire an' brimstone but he'll capture yo. Ef yer beat 'im yer'll hev to outspeed 'im, mind I tell yer. He'll write to Turner, the Marshal, ter nab yer ef he finds out yer've started fur Louisville, and ef Turner ever gits them gray eyes o' hissen on yer, yer in fur bad luck, sure. I don't want ter scare yer, ole boy, only ter caution yer. Now don't stop on the road one minute more 'n yer kin help. I've gin Jim a letter ter my friend Bugsby when yer git ter Frankfort. He'll give yer as good a pair o' roans es ever yer cracked a whip behind. Push on with 'em till yer can hire a fresh team, an' keep on doin' so till yer get ter Louisville. Try and reach there by to-morrow night, an' when yer do, drive straight down to the Jefferson ferry an' put the Ohio river between yerselves an' the State o' Kentucky 's soon as possible."

We listened with the most profound attention to these admonitions and instructions, and promised to follow his advice to the letter.

When we were seated in the wagon, the Colonel, turning to

our Jehu, a big powerful negro as black as Erebus, who belonged to him, addressed him in something like the following strain:

"Jim?"

"Yiss, sah."

"Bugsby's team 'll be pretty well used up by the time you get to Rogers'; try an' get a fresh one from him, an' when ye get to Snyder's give 'im my respects and tell 'im to give yer another fresh team; do the same to Hanlan's, and that one 'll take yer to Louisville. When ye get there, drive straight down to the Jefferson ferry an' put these gentlemen and their luggage on the boat. D'yr hear?"

"Yiss, massa, Ise heah!"

"Well, do it, an' if I hear of yer taking a cent from either of 'em, I'll skin yer alive!"

"Yiss, massa," responded Jim, showing his ivories from ear to ear.

"Very well then, see yer dused. Put up at Runelson's stable, an' next day at twelve start back, an' try an' git back here by Monday night, or I'll try an' git inter yer meat-house!"

"Ise 'll do it, massa Jake."

"Very good; an' don't cross the river an' fidget ter cum back, yer black scoundrel!"

"De lor!" chuckled Jim. "What's Ise gwine ter do wid them aberlishus niggers? Dey dusen't suit Jim, nohow."

"Drive on. God bless yer, Major!" was the last greeting we received from our disinterested friend. In a few seconds he was lost to our sight in the darkness of the night.

It was close upon eleven o'clock when we reached Frankfort, and scarcely a light was to be seen glimmering in the stony place, and we slipped into it so quietly that even the barking curs, which abound in Kentucky's darling seat of legislation, failed to announce our arrival. We drove up in front of a broad, low stone building, where Jim pulled up his panting team and informed us that this was massa Bugsby's livery stable. Jim having done some tall pounding with a rock on the stable door, it was opened from the inside by a venerable individual of the African persuasion, who held in his hand a lantern, and whose temper appeared to be slightly ruffled, possibly by being so unceremoniously roused from his slumbers.

"Whar's yer massa, nigger?" inquired Jim.

"What massa is yer talk about?"

"Massa Bugsby, nigger; ye knows dat."

"In he bed; whar yer s'pose he am at dis time o' night?" responded the indignant individual addressed.

"Den you go fotch 'im dis yer letter, kase he's wanted here right away," said Jim, holding out the Colonel's letter to the old man.

He took the missive in his hand, held it up to the light of the lantern, and gazed at the direction for some moments, to the immense disgust of Jim, who roared out at him, "Come, don't stan' dar peerin' at dat letter dat ar way, tryin' to make folks b'leive ye kin read; go right off wid it to massa Bugsby, case how we's in a hurry."

"De Lor, nigger! how de words dus cum outer you! Pears l'ke dey was peas rattlin' onto a dry hide."

"Well, dat 'll do now, nigger; take yerself off an' gib dat letter ter massa Bugsby."

"Phew!" whistled the frosty-headed old African, contemptuously, raising up his lantern and looking scornfully from behind it at Jim. "De more I libs, de more fools I sees ebery day!" with which parting shot the old fellow moved off, chuckling, satisfied at his own wit.

Nearly half an hour had elapsed when the gentleman bearing the name of Bugsby came to the front with a lantern in his hand, while the old negro brought up the rear, also bearing a lantern.

"Good evening, gentlemen," was the salutation of Mr. Bugsby.

"It's nearer morning, now, is it not, sir?" responded the Major.

Mr. Bugsby hauled out a big silver watch, which he consulted by the light of his lantern, remarking, "It's going on twelve; hadn't you better tie up for the night? It's precious dark, an' you'll find it very stony on t'other side o' the river."

"Mustn't do dat, nohow, massa Bugsby, kase de Kurnel he sais we must git de roan team and push rite along."

"Well then, I've nothing more to say; if that's the Colonel's orders he must be obeyed; so, Jim, go and help Robert throw the harness over the roans."

While the negroes were harnessing, the Major and myself were stretching our legs on the ground near the wagon. Mr.

Bugsby approached as near as politeness permitted, and, by way of apology for doing so, inquired, "What's going on in Lexington, gentlemen?" At the same moment he held up his lantern in such a position as to throw a strong light on the face of the Major, who stood nearest him; but that gentleman, probably not feeling disposed to gratify his curiosity, quickly turned his back to the light. Nothing daunted by this rebuff, he turned his attention to me, and flashed into my face the strong light from the opened side of his lantern; at the same time he inquired, "Many people gathering in to see the races there above?"

"A great many, I believe," I rejoined, without in the least changing my position, or moving a muscle in any respect. When he lowered his lantern, after a lengthened inspection of my physiognomy, I coolly asked him "how he liked it?"

"Like what?" demanded Mr. Bugsby.

"My face."

"Well, youngster, I've seen a d—n sight meaner ones."

"As you have taken such pains to examine it, I am glad it pleases you," I replied.

"I wanted to see, youngster, who the devil Jake Bowles was killing all the horses in the country for. He's not in the habit of wasting his powder on poor game."

After a short delay in crossing the river, we were again pushing forward as rapidly as the stony road and the darkness of the night would permit. Bugsby's remarks to me had aroused the Major's fears, or his curiosity, I am unable to say which, for he abstained from all communication with me, but finally asked Jim if his master and Mr. Bugsby were very intimate.

"I spects dey am, sah!" returned Jim; "dey buys hosses, swaps hosses, and trades in niggers, when de Kurnel es about henh, sah."

"Mr. Bugsby was grossly impertinent when he held his lantern up in a gentleman's face," remarked the Major.

"Haw! haw! haw!" laughed Jim, "I spects how massa Bugsby tinks yuse killed somebody, an' es streakin' it."

"And if he were certain such was the case, he would have given us up to the authorities, in order to get the reward eh, Jim?" asked the Major.

"Good lor! Massa Bugsby no do dat, sah! Dat won't do

'tall, kase all de white gemmen goes to massa Bugsby when dey gits in 'rouble. He make heap o' money dat way.'

"I suppose you mean, Jim, that when the white gentlemen get in difficulty with the law, that Mr. Bugsby furnishes them with horses to get away."

"Dat's massa Bugsby, clean out, sah."

At about daylight we reached Rogers' tavern, where we got some breakfast and a fresh team, and then we again pursued our flight, and after making two more changes and resting a couple of hours on the road, we reached Louisville in safety. We drove directly to the Jefferson ferry, where Jim deposited on the boat our trunks and valises, contrary to the wishes of the Major, who desired him to drive us to a hotel in Jeffersonville; but to all his entreaties, Jim answered in the same words, "It's agin de Kurnel's orders, massa Major, an' if I goes agin dem ar, he won't trust me no more." But contrary to those other orders which he had received, the black rascal was nothing loth to take the golden eagle offered him by the Major. We caused our luggage to be taken to the best hotel in the place, where we found comfortable quarters. When we had finished supper, I wrote and posted to Mr. Roberts a letter, informing him of our hurried flight, our present place of residence, and our anxiety that he should join us immediately, in order that we might settle up our business and depart.

A single day in the quiet town of Jeffersonville was sufficient to give one the blues, even had not a large commercial city like Louisville been standing on the opposite bank of the river, to lure me to the enjoyment of its fascinations and luxuries. Besides this, the sullen and disagreeable temper in which the Major had been since the day before our flight, rendered his exclusive society anything but enjoyable. My refusal to admit his friend Col. Bowles to a share in our game, still rankled in his breast. He openly accused me of being the sole cause of our late discomfiture. If I tried to defend myself, he persisted with peevishness and obstinacy in his opinion, declared he had never known trouble till he met me, and wound up by informing me, with much dignity, that, as soon as our affairs could be adjusted, a dissolution of partnership must take place. I left him to his own gloomy thoughts, and crossed over to Louisville without saying anything to him about my intention. My Lex-

ington scare had worn off, and I soon found myself traversing the streets of the city, with no fear of Marshal Turner before my eyes, nor in fact of any one else. This being my first visit to the place, I inquired my way to the Galt House, in hopes of meeting some person with whom I had been previously acquainted, but was doomed to disappointment. I staid there, nevertheless, till dinner-time, and entering the dining-room, took a seat at the table. Shortly after I had done so, a young man came and took the vacant place at my side, and addressed me with "You here, Morris? When did you leave Lexington?"

I recognized him at once as being a young man who was stopping at the same hotel with the Major and myself in Lexington, and who had frequently been in our gambling-room, where he had sometimes played against the bank. He had, while there, introduced himself to me as James Howard, from Georgia; said he had been following the sporting business for more than four years, and soon convinced me that he was well posted up in almost every subject in any degree appertaining to sporting.

"I arrived here last night, Mr. Howard," I replied; "have you been here long?"

"I got here last Tuesday," he rejoined, "but I'm going up to Lexington in the morning."

When I informed him that it was my intention not to return to Lexington, and that the Major had accompanied me to Jeffersonville, he showed an unusual degree of surprise, and had very little trouble in extracting from me the particulars of my flight from Lexington, and its cause.

"And so Jake Bowles has caught another brace of fools!" he exclaimed, as soon as I had informed him of that gentleman's connection with our flight.

"What do you mean, Mr. Howard, by a brace of fools?" I asked, feeling by no means complimented by either his words or manner.

"That he's worked a job on you, and run you off, that's all," replied Mr. Howard.

It was the very first time my stupid brain had ever been made acquainted with such an idea. I felt so confused by the rush of thoughts which thronged through my mind at this suggestion, that I could only inquire stupidly, "Why, what good could that do him?"

"Why, Morris, you must be green, not to see his object. He wanted to get the game himself. He'll ring in Smiley upon that party, and he'll make \$10,000 by the operation. He'll skin them fellers like eels."

"Can he cheat at faro?" I asked.

"Cheat! Cheat is no name for it! Why, he's double chain-lightning at it; he's cleaned out all the gamblers in Georgia and South Carolina, and you could no sooner get one of them into a room where he was dealing faro, than you could get them into a pest-house."

"I wonder Col. Bowles tolerates such a person, much less employs him," I returned, by way of extracting some more explicit information.

"Jake Bowles don't want nor won't have any other kind; he's the biggest beat in the South, and never was known to risk his money on the square. He thinks of nothing else but putting up jobs to rob somebody, either at cards or horses."

"Then do I understand you to infer that the authorities would not have interfered with us?"

"They have never yet done so with any one during race times."

"And you think Col. Bowles fooled us, when he induced us to leave the place?"

"Why, it's dollars to bits he's done it."

I now firmly believed for the first time that we were his dupes. A thousand small circumstances, at the time unnoticed, now presented themselves to my mind, and forged such a complete chain of evidence, that I knew perfectly well that it was quite true. I, however, said nothing more at that time to Mr. Howard, in whose company I visited two or three gambling-houses, and would have remained all night in Louisville, had I not feared my absence would cause the Major some uneasiness. At about nine o'clock I reached our hotel, and found him irascibly pacing up and down the piazza in no amiable frame of mind. When I made my appearance before him, he stopped in his promenade, and scanning me from head to foot with a flashing eye, inquired severely, "Where have you been, sir?"

"I've been over in Louisville, Major."

"Then it's a d—n pity they didn't put you in prison, and keep you there, sir!" thundered the Major. "Haven't we had trouble enough, sir, without your seeking to bring more upon us?"

I had decided not to tell him anything of what I had learned from Howard concerning Bowles, but to await the coming of Mr. Roberts, whose arrival I expected on the following evening. I felt assured that if the Colonel had been playing his disgraceful pranks upon us, he was the man who would be sure to find it out, and I knew that from his lips alone would the Major credit the assertion that we had fallen victims to his dishonest artifices. Therefore, without bandying further words with him, I retired to my bed, leaving him to continue his walk up and down the piazza, and, like "Tam O'Shanter's wife," "nursing his wrath to keep it warm."

The next morning he made a point of insisting that I should on no pretense whatever absent myself from him until after the arrival of Mr. Roberts. He added that my absence the day before had caused him great uneasiness, and that he was satisfied that the officers of Louisville, before this, had accurate information of our whereabouts, and description of our persons, and were only waiting for a suitable opportunity to arrest us. To allay his fears and satisfy him, I promised faithfully to remain with him throughout the day, and, moreover, kept the promise.

As we expected, Mr. Roberts arrived in the evening, having received my letter on Sunday evening and left Lexington on the following morning. He said he had been detained in Cincinnati, on account of some business difficulties, considerably longer than he at first expected; but having left us in a flourishing condition, and having no fear of our being in any way molested by the authorities, he had no cause to feel any uneasiness on our account. "I reached Lexington," he said, "about four o'clock on Saturday evening, and heard that Jack had been at my house, inquiring for me. I walked directly down to your gambling-room, where I found a game going forward, dealt by Mr. Smiley, a friend of Col. Bowles. To all my inquiries respecting you, he could give but one answer, which was that you had 'pulled up stakes and gone,' as he expressed it. I then went to the hotel, where I was informed that you had left the house suddenly the evening before, in company with Col. Bowles, to whom I was referred for further information. In the course of the evening I found that gentleman, and he answered my questions relative to your sudden change of base in this wise: 'My friend Major Jenks got the "studs" on and left town kitin'; the damned old fool got tired



cos he'd won too much money! I tried hard ter get 'im to stay through the races, but he wouldn't, so I bought his gamb'ling-room, jist ter oblige 'im more 'n anything else. I had ter put Smiley somewhar, so I thought I'd stick 'im in thar, an' see if he couldn't do somethin' for hisself.' I asked him where you had gone, and he said he believed you went to Cincinnati, but couldn't say for certain. I tried to find out from him what sort of conveyance you left town by, but he could not tell me that either. Your unaccountable flight gave me considerable uneasiness, not because you had money belonging to me—on that score I was perfectly satisfied everything was right—but your mysterious and hurried departure was to me inexplicable, and I could only account for it to myself on the ground of some extraordinary fear having been brought to bear on you."

"On the following evening I received your letter informing me that you had ascertained that the authorities were going to arrest you, and that you were enabled to escape through the kind assistance of Col. Bowles. In a moment, knowing him as I did for a scheming trickster, I saw the whole, and knew you had been made the victims of his deception. But in order to satisfy myself entirely, and leave no room for doubt, I called upon the prosecuting Attorney, the Sheriff, and Mr. Dawson, the City Marshal, who each separately told me that they had never heard of any complaint having been made against you, and that no warrant had ever been issued for your arrest, nor had any such thing ever been in contemplation. I have every confidence in the assertion of these gentlemen. They are among my warmest friends, and I know they would not deceive me. I took the stage next morning, and here I am, and I want you both to return with me to Lexington, to-morrow morning. I'll show you whether I can protect your game there or not, and I'll make the town a d—n sight too hot to hold Jake Bowles outside the stone-jug."

Howard having already prepared me for something of this kind, I was not so completely taken by surprise as was the Major, who was really to be pitied, though he had probably fallen into this self-same trap for perhaps the sixtieth time in his life. On short acquaintance he had never been so completely wrapped up in any one as he had been in Col. Jacob Bowles; and now, to find that all his bombastic tales, to which he had lis-

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tened so delightedly, and all his flattering professions of friendship, were but the artifices of a cunning trickster to rob him! 'twas too humiliating. The revelations of the duplicity and treachery of the man not only amazed him, but seemed for a time actually to stupefy him and cause him to lose his faculty of speech. But when he recovered his powers of articulation, like an impeded fountain, which, in overcoming some obstacle, has gathered new force, the curses flowed from his lips in an unbroken, resistless stream. "Infernal thieving horse-jockies and sharps! Why have I ever been their dupes? Must I always be their prey? Horsemen are all thieves, from the highest to the lowest; the infernal tribe of villains!"

"Come! come! come, Major! Moderate your language; recollect that I made my *debut* on the turf many years ago. Then there's your esteemed friend, Col. Johnson, and many others. Ease up, Major, ease up."

"It's one of nature's freaks, sir, to sprinkle a few gentlemen among a thousand thieves. But give me your hand, Jack," he cried, turning to me; "I owe you an apology, and I've done you a great pecuniary wrong by my folly. Had I taken your advice, sir, that infernal thief could never have injured us; but you'll punish him, won't you, Roberts? You can and must do it; I'll pay the expenses, whatever they may be."

"No, sir! You'll do nothing of the sort," returned the gentleman addressed; "and rest assured I'll make Lexington a pretty warm place for Mr. Bowles when I get back! But you're both coming back with me, aren't you?" he inquired.

"No, sir!" responded the irascible Major. "I'm going back to Virginia, and I'll stay there, too; and if I'm ever caught outside of it again I hope they'll stick me in some jail, and keep me there for the balance of my natural life!"

"And you, Jack?" he asked, turning towards me.

"I'm going to New Orleans."

Early on the following morning I crossed the river with Mr. Roberts, and saw him off on the stage coach for Lexington, after he had promised to write me at length, in the course of a few days. At eleven o'clock of the same day I saw the Major start off on the mail boat for Cincinnati, and took a kind farewell of my dear old friend, whom I then saw for the last time on earth, although I did not fail to correspond regularly with him, up to

within a few years of his death, which event took place at Richmond, in 1856. He had accumulated a sufficient competency, the proceeds of his interest in various faro-banks in Richmond and Washington, to keep him in comfort and respectability during his last days.

Our pleasant correspondence was broken in upon in consequence of my restless disposition, and the wild, wandering life I led during many years, being often months at a time where letters and post-offices were, to say the least, yet in their extreme infancy. Returning to San Francisco after vagabondizing a few years in Tahiti, Australia, and along the shores of Japan and China, I learned, to my unfeigned sorrow, that the soul of Major George Jenks had returned to its Maker, and that his mortal remains reposed beneath the soil of his beloved native State. That soil may have been the last resting-place of many wiser and more learned men, but never that of one who dealt more honestly and chivalrously by his fellows, or possessed a warmer heart. Peace to his ashes.

A few days after the departure of my friends, I received a letter of which the following is an exact copy.

*Lexington, Oct. 26, 183-.*

**FRIEND JACK:**

Dawson made a descent on your old room last night, and seized the furniture and gambling-tools. Colonel Bowles and his friend Mr. Smiley were the only persons arrested. This morning, after passing the night in the station-house, they were hauled up before the court, where they gave bail for their appearance before the District Court in sums of \$1,000 each, upon which bonds they were released.

Rest assured that I shall follow this matter up, and Colonel Bowles shall learn to his sorrow, before I am gone with him, that his little joke will not turn out in the end to be either pleasant or profitable.

Respectfully yours,

ROBERTS.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

## THE MISSISSIPPI.

A few days after the events recorded in the last chapter, I found myself a passenger on board the "Mediator," gliding along the picturesque banks of the lower Ohio, onward bound for New Orleans. The boat was crowded with passengers—men, women, and children—the greater part of whom were residents of the Crescent City, and who had been wandering in the North during the hot summer months, or perhaps the East or West, wherever business or pleasure led, in order to avoid the myriads of mosquitoes which a kind Providence bestows so bountifully on the denizens of the sunny South during the heated term, and that thrice-dreaded scourge, the yellow fever, about which learned medical men have wrangled and jangled for more than two centuries, without being one whit wiser to-day on the question of where the poison of this terrible disease lies, or from whence it is extracted, than was Père Dutertre when he first saw the fearful malady in the Antilles, in the summer of 1635.

A few minutes' detention at that classic mud-hole denominated Cairo, and I was at length launched on the broad bosom of the great Father of Waters, as American vanity is fond of styling it. The yearning of years was finally gratified; but what a disappointment! The majestic river! The mighty river! The grand river! The father of waters! The very first sight instantly destroyed every vestige of romance engendered by these sounding titles, and many more of the same sort, which, from my earliest youth up, I had heard applied to these turbid and treacherous waters. While steaming down its swift and dingy current, not a single beautiful object in all the landscape met my eye. All was dreary monotony. The alluvial shore on one side lined with blue mud, while on the opposite bank the scene was varied by immense stretches of white sand, which the winds, in their sportive fancy, raised in clouds, and whirled hither and thither in circling eddies. Then the shore would be for miles covered with almost impenetrable forests of ash and cottonwood,

ROBERTS.

underlined with a heavy growth of thick fields of matted cane, which confined the vision, like the river, within the banks, and made the eye turn for relief to the blue vault of heaven. Even the melancholy sight of snagged steamers, which every now and then met our view, were welcome breaks to the dreary sameness of the voyage, while the appearance of an occasional wood-pile along the shore gave us the assurance that we had not entirely passed beyond the confines of civilization, and the hail of a passing steamer gave more than usual confidence and pleasure.

What indomitable courage, what patience, what perseverance must those pioneers of civilization have possessed, who first sailed down this unknown stream! How comparatively few among the millions who glided over the bosom of this gigantic ocean tributary, ever even heard the names of Marquette, La Salle, or Jolliet? Launched upon this unknown stream, in their frail bark canoes, with nothing but vast swamps, fields of desert sand, matted cane-brakes, and impenetrable forests to greet their vision; ready to fall a prey at any moment to savage beasts, or, worse still, to barbarous and blood-thirsty men, they yet did not despair. Each moment the current was carrying them farther from friends, home, and all they held most dear; perhaps to ignominious captivity or a painful death. But, animated by a noble resolve, they feared none of these things, but pressed on through discouragements and dangers sufficient to appall the stoutest heart till their end was gained.

The whole civilized world has for generations showered praises on Columbus for the courage, patience, and perseverance with which he pursued his westerly course over unknown seas, in search of a new world; nor would I take a single leaf from the wreath of fame by which he is immortally crowned. He was certainly well qualified, both by nature and education, for his arduous undertaking, and had he failed, the compass which steered him onward would enable him to retrace his steps. The sight of birds, floating driftwood, and the finding of bottom with the lead, enabled him to keep up the rapidly sinking spirits of his crew and reanimate them with new hopes. Behind him were powerful patrons who believed in his success, and who had furnished him with ships, men, and means, and sent him on his dubious and uncertain voyage. Should he be successful, as he firmly be-

Heaved he was certain, in reaching the East Indies by a shorter route than by way of the Cape of Good Hope, on his return wealth and honors were waiting to be showered upon him with lavish hands.

Marquette and Jolliet had no powerful government or patrons to encourage or assist them in their perilous journey. Their five Indian companions and two birch canoes were their sole retinue and means of transportation. The Potawattamie braves heard of their project with wonder and incredulity. "Those distant nations," said they, "never spare the stranger; their mutual wars fill the borders with bands of marauding warriors who never spare the captives who fall into their hands; the great river abounds in monsters who devour both men and canoes, and the excessive heat occasions death." But to all these things these indomitable explorers turned a deaf ear, and, animated by a high courage and noble resolve, started upon their dangerous way. When the shores of Spain receded from the view of Columbus, as he started on his voyage of discovery, his future was not the shadow of a shade darker, if as dark as that of Marquette when he launched his frail squadron on the bosom of the Mississippi. Columbus was surrounded by all the comforts enjoyed by sailors at that time, and had no more danger to apprehend than that which falls to the lot of ordinary mariners; his ships were seaworthy, and manned by picked sailors and warriors ready to enforce his commands if necessary. Marquette and his companions knew as little where they were going, as did Columbus and his comrades. The former knew by observation that large streams of water made their way to the sea; but knew not, supposing himself to have overcome all obstacles, and to have reached the mouth, whether those waters were received by the Atlantic or Pacific Ocean, or the Gulf of Mexico. Christianity, civilization, and the glory of France, induced him to tempt unknown dangers, tropical heats, and intolerable insects, savage beasts and more savage men, in order to solve this question. The sacred calumet of peace, hung around his neck by the Illinois chieftain, was to him and his comrades a better protection than the armed adventurers who followed Columbus. Marquette, Jolliet, and afterwards La Salle, discovered the mighty river from its source to its mouth; but posterity has very nearly robbed them of their hard-earned and richly deserved laurels. Ex-

cept in the pages of history, or an occasional steamer or insignificant village or county which has borne the names of these heroic men, their memories are almost entirely obliterated. Neither the chisel of the sculptor nor the brush of the painter has transmitted to posterity the lineaments of either. Even France, who delights to honor the memory of her brave sons, has allowed their names to sink almost into oblivion, though she never produced more daring explorers, or men who have given to her more territory or more widely extended her fame. But it is a general weakness with mankind to honor and laud the bloody deeds of cut-throat warriors, more than to properly acknowledge the services of men who, by their brains, perseverance, and courage, have opened up to future civilization regions hitherto unknown and unexplored.

The world only knows De Soto as the discoverer of the Mississippi, and as such has sounded peans of praises for his deeds and delighted to honor his memory. Ships, steamers, counties, villages, and even rum-mills, have been called after him, and still keep his memory green in the hearts of the people, not to mention that noble effort of one of our ablest artists, which adorns the rotunda of the Capitol at Washington, representing his arrival on the banks of the great river; a master-piece which none who have once beheld can ever forget.

But the honor falls not where it is justly due. As a blind hog stumbles on an acorn, so did De Soto discover the Mississippi River. After assisting in the robbing of the Peruvians, he returned to Spain with his blood-stained gold; but not satisfied with the deeds of murder and rapine he had committed, nor with the amount of his ill-gotten treasures, he started from Florida westward in search of adventure with more than a thousand unprincipled cut-throats in his train, ready for any deeds of violence and blood. The exploration of unknown regions for the benefit of his race was by no means the object of the expedition; but gold. "The Spaniard has a disease of the heart, and nothing but gold can cure it," said Pizarro; and none knew his countrymen better than that cruel tyrant.

But little is known of the particulars of the expedition of De Soto. He was not accompanied by a lying Gomara to cover up his disgraceful and bloody deeds with the flowers of rhetoric, as was Cortez, but it seems that, after rambling about for some

time in that portion of the country which now comprises the States of Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi, brutally massacring the unoffending natives, burning their huts, and committing every possible deed of violence and murder, he reached the great stream near the mouth of White River. From thence he rambled on to the southern borders of the Missouri, and from thence southward to the Red River. The outrages which characterized the first part of his expedition were in no wise abated. He wantonly murdered and enslaved the natives who crossed his path, and every step of his journey was marked with blood. Disease, together with his frequent battles with the natives, had now reduced his ranks to about four hundred men. They sought gold, but found graves. Finally the death of De Soto, and his romantic burial by night, beneath the waters of the Mississippi, has left behind him a strong tincture of romance, to cover the deeds of the bloody marauder, and has impressed posterity with the belief that he fell a martyr to the cause of civilization and the good of unborn generations of his fellow-men. But a very different motive governed his actions: sordid avarice spurred him and his followers on; the hope of finding another Peru or Mexico, abounding with gold, which they might obtain by murdering the untutored natives—a thing they would have done with as little compunction as they would have crushed a noxious insect in their path, and thereby adding to the already bloody laurels of Spain. If it be true that the followers of De Soto escaped the richly deserved vengeance of the natives, and reached the mouth of the Mississippi, and from thence across the Gulf of Mexico to the Panuco River, it is one of the very strangest events in history, that a river of such magnitude, whose mouth must have consequently become known to the Spaniards, should have remained undiscovered and unknown for more than a century afterwards. The whole tale seems as fabulous as the fountain of youth, or the undiscovered Eldorado.

In the year 1823, Captain Shreve commanded the good steamer "General Washington," then the fastest boat that ever plowed the western waters. In the designated year he made the quickest time ever known, between New Orleans and Louisville, and on his arrival at the latter port he anchored his steamer in the middle of the river and fired twenty-five guns, being one for



each day consumed in making his trip, then considered the most wonderful voyage ever accomplished. The entire population of Louisville were gathered on the bank to behold that wonder of speed, the glorious "General Washington." Captain Shreve was fêted, and borne in triumph by the huzzaiing multitude through the streets of Louisville, and in deep-felt gratitude for the honors showered on him, thanked his enthusiastic admirers in an eloquent speech, while toasts were drank, and "red-eye" flowed freely, and all declared the time made by the "George Washington" could never be equaled. But in defiance of this assertion the time was beaten before the end of the season, and in 1828 the "Tecumseh" made the same trip in eight days and seventeen hours, and in the year 1843 the "Sultana" made the trip in four days and twenty-two hours. From the time of the memorable trip of the "George Washington," down to the speedy voyage of the "Sultana," steamers have vied with each other, both in racing and in making fast trips. As a consequence of this delectable pastime, the souls of hundreds of persons were hurried before the throne of their Maker, unprepared and uncalled, by the burning of steamers, bursting of boilers, and running upon snags. In this golden era it was considered highly dishonorable for a steamboat captain to allow his steamer, while under way, to be passed by another boat without giving her a race; and these trials of speed but too often resulted in the scattering of their passengers in every imaginable direction, by the blowing up of their boilers. Whenever a steamer was destroyed, with the majority of its passengers and crew, by a snag, a fire, collision, or compressed steam, a body of citizens under the title of a "committee" or a "jury of inquiry" would be appointed to make a searching inquiry into the "appalling accident," as the public press would most probably denominate it. It being for the interest of steamboat owners to exonerate themselves in the eyes of the public from the charge of running unsafe steamers or employing incapable officers, they would spare neither money nor trouble to have upon the examination committee their own creatures, and the verdict rendered was in nineteen cases out of twenty, the same old tune, "nobody to blame." In the meantime, one or two of the most important newspapers, near the scene of the disaster, would be squared to inform the public that it was impossible to guard against such

accidents, and that the officers were all perfectly efficient, and had nobly performed their duty in the hour of peril. Trade and property were so powerful, that authority dare not question the incapability or recklessness of river men, and the scale in which reposed the safety of human life kicked the beam when balanced against that which contained money.

In those palmy days, steamboat officers did what seemed good in their own sight, with none to molest or make them afraid. They neither dreaded courts of justice nor were they one whit restrained by fear of public opinion, from committing the most brutal outrages on inoffensive persons placed in their charge. The mate or engineer who could wield a billet of wood or a bar of iron the most scientifically on the heads of deck-hands, firemen, and deck-passengers, was considered "a regular screamer," and received the highest wages. When laborers were plenty on the levee at New Orleans, it was common for steamers to hire twenty-five or thirty more than the complement required for her crew, in order to facilitate the taking in of sufficient pine wood to run the seven or eight hundred miles up the river, and to discharge whatever way-cargo she might have between New Orleans and Vicksburg. These men would be discharged at the different landings on the river as fast as their services were no longer required, having shipped with the idea that they would be wanted for the round trip. They did not, of course, expect that, after a few days' hard labor, they would be discharged in a place where it was impossible for them to get anything to do, and where it would cost them more money than they had earned to take them back to New Orleans. These hands were sometimes—as a punishment for incurring the displeasure of some of the petty officers—set ashore in impenetrable cane-brakes, or on lonely islands, and any murmurings or remonstrances on their part were instantly silenced by a blow on the head with a billet of wood, and not unfrequently the knife and the bullet were brought into requisition. Nor were passengers exempt from these brutalities. To those of wealth and influence the most slavish attention was shown, while modest and unassuming strangers were neglected and treated with rudeness and contempt if they dared demand their rights. The smallest infringement of the rules of the boat has planted many a one in a solitary state on the edge of a cane-brake, with his luggage

beside him. Deck passengers were stowed like hogs on the lower deck of the steamer, where they were made to feel all the degradation of poverty in the brutal and disgraceful treatment they received from the petty officers belonging to the boat.

Maltreated crews of vessels and steamers, and also their passengers, had from time to time brought their wrongs before the tribunals of their country and clamored for redress. But it was impossible to obtain anything like justice, where capital was the defendant; and in no cities were these tribunals more blunted or deaf to the cries of justice, than in St. Louis, Louisville, and New Orleans. In these cities the majority of the river steamers were owned by the wealthy merchants, and the officers of these steamers were their servants, whom they protected at all hazards. However flagrant their crimes, money and talent were ready to stand forth in their defense and save them from the lash of justice, and that justice was dispensed by a cultured class who were but too ready to pander to the power of the almighty dollar. What could ignorant crews or obscure passengers expect, whose only recommendation to justice was that they had been wronged, while opposed to them was money and talent in abundance—where obsequious Judges and prosecuting attorneys were eager to bow the knee before the shrine of wealth and influence. But let the accused be some ignorant boat-hand or some obscure passenger on trial for killing or maiming some brutal officer, who had perhaps tantalized him into committing the deed by his taunts and jeers, justice did not sleep then; but listened to the accusation, and condemned the guilty wretch as implacably as the presiding dignitary over the "Court of Death," delineated by the masterly pencil of Rembrandt Peel, meted out his award to every culprit brought before him.

It is quite natural to suppose that men respecting no law save that of brute force would at times fall victims to their own dastardly deeds of violence. Such was in many instances the case among the steamboat officers. Numbers were openly killed or secretly assassinated by those whom they had maltreated. In the large cities these murderers were punished by law, when arrested; but if, after the commission of their deeds of blood, the perpetrators could gain the banks either of the Mississippi or Ohio River, at any point between the ports of St. Louis, Louisville, and New Orleans, they were safe from all pun-

ishment by the law. The people who lived in the scattered settlements along the banks of these rivers had conceived a deep and abiding hatred towards the generality of steamboat officials, on account of their brutal and overbearing conduct. The first season that I struck the Mississippi River, twenty-two steamboat officers fell by the bullet and the knife, in consequence of having violated the persons of their murderers. During the same summer and the following winter eleven boats were snagged between St. Louis and New Orleans, and six were blown up by the bursting of their boilers, and over five hundred souls were hurried into the presence of their Maker. High old times were these on the Mississippi River.

The long suppressed murmurings of public opinion against the shameful atrocities perpetrated by river men, on the western waters, became now too formidable to be longer disregarded. Congress passed laws regulating the navigation of all inland steamers; the duties of steamboat officials were clearly defined; committees were appointed to examine into the capabilities of pilots and engineers, and also to ascertain the sea-worthiness of vessels carrying freight and passengers; inspectors were appointed to look to boilers and machinery. About the same time the people of Louisiana demanded of their legislators that severe laws defining the relations between steamboat officers and their crews should be passed, and the public voice compelled the courts to enforce these laws. The former brutal treatment of steamboat hands was no longer tolerated; such amusements became too costly to be indulged in by their officers. The wages of crews had to be settled before any other claims; and until that was done the boat could be held by the Sheriff. Public opinion frowned down steamboat racing, and fewer boilers were burst in consequence. The "knock-down and drag-out" officers of the "screamer" tribe were obliged to stand back and give place to such as could direct their men in the performance of their duty, without resorting to oaths and violence. Steamboat officers were no longer permitted to gamble with passengers, or to enter the cabin with loud oaths, or seat themselves at the dinner-table in filthy garments or their shirt-sleeves. The mess-room and sleeping-rooms of the employees were separated from those of the passengers; and only the captain and his clerk and first officer, with the servants required there, were allowed en-

trance into the cabin. Humanity and courtesy has made mighty strides in this section of the country over cruelty and oppression. The recklessness and brutality which once characterized steamboat officials has totally disappeared from our western waters; and to-day the traveler can nowhere meet with kinder or more polite treatment than on board a river steamer, or with more civil and gentlemanly men than their officials.

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#### CHAPTER XXXIV.

##### RIVER SHARPERS.

Day and night during our voyage on the "Mediator," from Louisville to New Orleans, were the card-tables surrounded by the votaries of chance, and often as many as five or six of these tables could be seen scattered from the ladies' cabin to the social hall of the boat, with games going forward at each.

The games which were mostly played in those days on river steamers were poker, brag, whist, Botson, and old sledge; and if banking games were set up in the social hall, they were usually vingt-et-un, chuck, and sometimes faro. According to the rules of these steamers, all gambling was prohibited after ten o'clock in the evening; but in many instances these rules were a dead letter, and the morning sun frequently found one or more parties at the card-table engaged at their favorite games. In these jolly times the steamboat officers mingled with the passengers in the cabin as equals, and it was no uncommon thing to see uncouth pilots, mates, and greasy engineers engaged at the card-tables with well-dressed travelers. Passengers were privileged to amuse themselves just as they pleased, so long as they did not infringe upon the rights of others, or interfere in any respect with the duties of the officers or crew. This latitude sometimes led to some rather strong contrasts; for instance, there might frequently be seen in the ladies' cabin a group of the godly praying and singing psalms, while in the dining-saloon, from which the tables had been removed, another party were dancing merrily to the music of a fiddle, while farther along, in the social hall, might be heard the loud laughter of jolly carousers around the

drinking bar, and occasionally chiming in with the sound of the revelry, the rattling of money and checks, and the sound of voices at the card-tables.

Previous to the appearance of the card-sharper and his newly invented schemes for cheating, on the river the card-tables of a steamer were free to all persons of gentlemanly habits and manners. The gambler was not excluded from a seat there on account of his superior skill at play; or, at least, it was an exceedingly rare thing for one person to object to another on these grounds. Pride would not permit the humiliating confession. Neither would men holding real or equivocal positions in society, and who, by the arbitrary laws of that society, felt themselves compelled to shun a professional gambler on the street, think their reputation compromised by meeting him as an equal on board a steamer at the card-tables.

The votaries of chance were not yet aroused to the fact that they could be insidiously robbed at the card-table when everything seemed perfectly fair and above-board; but when that enlightening took place, the gambler was immediately classed with the sharper, because the verdant were unable to understand where the gambler left off and the thief began. Thimble-riggers, dice-coggers, trigger-wheel players, strop-players, and card-sharpers of every description, were classed as gamblers.

These river sharpers, for their mutual advantage, traveled in small companies, but while on board a steamer, feigned to be total strangers to each other. Their number was always sufficient to make up a card party whenever they could induce one or two "gulls" to "join them in a small game, merely for amusement." Whenever one of their number could manage to obtain a seat among a poker or brag party that would not stand any rough nonsense in the way of "stocking," or "holding out," his confederates would seat themselves in such a position that they could see the cards held by his adversaries, and "item" the strength of their hands to him by signs. This was done variously, sometimes with the fingers, one held out denoting a pair, two, two pairs, three, threes, four fingers, fours, and five, a flush or full hand. Hands were sometimes telegraphed by twirling the head of a cane in various directions; and men had systems of signs which were perfectly intelligible, consisting in peculiar ways of puffing out cigar smoke.

The early sharpers depended on fleecing their adversaries at poker, brag, euchre, and all-fours, and similar games, while engaged with them at play, by "holding out" one or more cards on them. These would be hidden in their laps or behind the neck, and sometimes in the joint of the knees, and "rung in" whenever a favorable opportunity occurred for doing so. These methods of cheating, as well as "iteming" hands, are time-honored institutions among the sharper tribe, and were probably practiced by their European brethren a century before the paddle of a steamboat made its first revolution in the turbid waters of the Mississippi.

Playing marked cards was a specialty with a few sharpers. They marked their own cards on the backs, nearly every sharper having his own secret cipher for doing so. While playing with a single adversary, marked cards could be used most advantageously; the more persons engaged with them in a game of brag or poker, the more difficult was their labor and the more they had to contend with. In a card party consisting of four or five players, the marked-card player can only manage to read the cards of one of his adversaries hands. I have heard that some of them could keep the run of two hands at once with perfect ease, but having never known of such an instance, I beg leave to doubt the assertion.

There are plenty of stamped-card players who can keep the run of two hands correctly in a game of poker where four or more persons are engaged, but it seems to me beyond the range of probability for any one to accomplish the same feat with what is known in sharper's parlance as "scratched paper." The marked-card player could accomplish nothing on a steamer, except by the connivance of the bar-tender, to whom he was obliged to give a certain share in his profits as the price of his assistance and silence, and for ringing in his cards upon whatever party upon whom they thought they could be made profitable. These worthies seldom wasted their talents and their "scratched paper" on any except those who were likely to reward them handsomely for their time and trouble.

The "tricky tribe," while playing all-fours, ecarte, euchre, etc., with verdant adversaries too far advanced to stand a "half-stock," or the "palm," would resort to marking the most advantageous cards with the thumb-nail by scratching them on



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their edges, generally on their sides near the corners. Some-  
 times they would "blaze" with their finger-nails, or otherwise  
 mark the aces and kings on their backs, in order to know them  
 at poker, or the braggers and aces at brag; at the latter game  
 the advantage was very considerable, while with the former it  
 amounted to little. The marking of certain cards in a pack,  
 while engaged at a game, is not only a tedious operation, but  
 decidedly a dangerous undertaking if not skillfully done. Per-  
 sons with whom such tricks are generally tried on are those  
 whose suspicions have been aroused; and parties of this kind are  
 hard to cheat, or rather are on the alert to prevent any frauds  
 from being practiced upon them. None of the tribe that I ever  
 heard of ever succeeded in gaining any prominence among the  
 members of their own profession for successfully marking cards  
 while playing, and making them tell advantageously at a game.

*Les chevaliers d'industrie* of Europe are far ahead of our own  
 in this art. Many of them, while playing at whist, ecarte,  
 cribbage, and similar games, mark with their thumb-nails in an  
 incredibly short space of time all the important cards in the  
 pack, and play them equally as well as the best stamped-card  
 player. In the year 1860 I met one of these gentlemen in Paris,  
 a Frenchman by birth, of the most suave and agreeable manners  
 and gentlemanly deportment. I had the honor of making his  
 acquaintance, and one evening, while seated in my room discuss-  
 ing with me the various fine arts as practiced at cards, he offer-  
 ed to bet me a napoleon that while we were playing four games  
 of ecarte, he would mark twelve cards in the pack. At any  
 time during the playing of the four games, if I could detect him  
 marking a single card by showing the spot on which it was  
 marked, I won the wager; or if, when the four games were finish-  
 ed, and I had shuffled the pack to my satisfaction, he could  
 not then take up the pack, and running the cards off its back  
 one at a time and turning them over on the table, face up, as he  
 came to it, any card which he had marked, naming its suit and  
 size before doing so, or if he made a single mistake, he lost. I  
 accepted his wager, and we played the four games of ecarte  
 without my being able to detect him marking a single card.  
 When we had finished the games I shuffled the pack and hand-  
 ed it to him; he turned over fourteen cards as he came to them,  
 naming their suit and size as he did so without a single halt.



While we were playing our games, he had handled his cards rather awkwardly for an adept, but there was nothing in his actions that would in the least arouse suspicion, and it was only when I held the cards which he had marked, up to the light, and let its glare fall directly upon the marks, which were done near the corner by a fine blaze that was made by the thumb-nail, and in various ciphers, that I was able to detect the fraud.

Who was the inventor of stamped cards I am unable to say, but that they originated in this country is nearly unquestionable. No mention is made of them in any of the gambling works published in Europe; nor among the multitude of tricks which have been exposed, both by writers on the subject and those that have been at various times ventilated before tribunals of justice, have I ever seen or heard of any mention being made of stamped cards. Even at the present day, European sharpers know but little about them, when they might be so serviceably used at the various short-card games played in those countries.

Unlike our own free and enlightened country, the despotic laws of Europe will not permit card manufacturers to fabricate unfair cards and flood the continent with their printed circulars informing whom it may concern that they are ready to supply all varieties of stamped cards of different ciphers, diagrams, and patterns. The European manufacturer who ventured to commit so flagrant and public a breach of honesty would not only find his business broken up, but himself incarcerated in a prison. In this country we have plenty of manufacturers of stamped cards, who send out their circulars to all parts of the country, accompanied by diagrams of the different patterns of cards, and the various ciphers used upon them. A Mr. Bartlett, of the city of New York, has been engaged in this business about forty years, and no law in the smallest degree molests or restrains him. How would the commercial public take it, should some engraver advertise that he was ready to supply counterfeiters with plates on the different banks throughout the country.

Stamped cards were unknown in Mexico previous to our invasion of that country, nor were they known to the people of South America, so far as I have been able to ascertain, and I took great pains to do so, and had many favorable opportunities during more than a year spent in rambling through Peru, Ecuador, and Chili, besides having made in California, in the early

days of gold, the acquaintance of gamblers from nearly every country of South America. Not one of these have I ever yet met who had any idea of stamped cards, beyond what they had learned in California. This non-manufacture among the Spanish racers of this hemisphere convinces me that they were unknown to the Spaniards, otherwise they would have introduced them into their colonies; for in no games could they have been made so heavily advantageous and profitable to the sharper, as in the two favorite ones of the Spaniards, viz., the bluff game of "pacao" and the banking game of monte.

Before the Americans invaded their country, the Mexicans knew nothing about stamped cards. When the City of Mexico was captured by General Scott, sharpers from the States flocked there in droves. They were not slow, by any means, in perceiving the immense advantage to be gained from stamped cards when rung in on monte dealers; but where were they to get the monte cards manufactured for this purpose? Some of the brilliant lights of the fraternity started for New York, laid their dilemma before Bartlett, and in a few months the line of travel from Vera Cruz to the city of Mexico was flooded with American manufactured monte cards, *all stamped*. This attempt, however, proved a failure, for neither American nor Mexican gamblers would use the cards; as, though much finer than any before manufactured here, they were very coarse, compared with those made in the City of Mexico. The Mexican government had sold the monopoly of card manufacturing to certain individuals in each State in the Republic, and a single company in the City of Mexico possessed the whole right of doing so in that State, and their cards were in use by all the gamblers on Taylor's and Scott's line of occupation. But one resource was now left to the sharpers, which was to bribe the owners of this establishment. They succeeded in doing so, by paying the manufacturers five thousand dollars for one hundred gross of cards, of patterns similar to the square cards in use, stipulating for an equal amount of each pattern. The sharpers were to furnish the necessary plates, which they were obliged to have made in New York, and brought from thence to the manufacturers in the City of Mexico. This statement I give in substance just as I received it from the lips of a worthy member of the fraternity, now dead, by name Mr. William Clemmens, who was one of the committee of

sharpers who negotiated for the manufacture of the stamped cards. But unfortunately for the enterprising movers of this scheme, so much time was consumed in getting the cards ready, that about the period that their speculation was ripe, peace was suddenly declared, and the American troops evacuated the country.

But following close on the heels of the war came the discovery of the golden fields of California, and in the early days of that excitement monte was the only banking game patronized by the shoals who flocked from all parts of the world to the golden State. These cards now came into good play, and during the summer of 1849 were extensively used, many of the sharpers having made fortunes by them.

In the following winter they returned to the City of Mexico, and caused two hundred gross more to be made, and brought them back with them to California. But in some manner suspicion was raised against these cards, which finally led to their detection. And no sooner did it become a fixed fact that one pattern of these cards was stamped, and therefore dishonest, than all the cards manufactured in the Republic of Mexico were entirely discarded and repudiated, and those manufactured in Barcelona, Spain, were used instead. These cards have never been tampered with, and retain their popularity to the present day.

Stamped cards first appeared in this country between the years 1834 and 1835. When first discovered the secret was so precious as to be carefully guarded and monopolized by a few sharpers. As is usual with all new inventions of the kind, gamblers first fell victims to them, and continued to be so for many years. At first they were manufactured, like counterfeit money, with great secrecy, in unlikely places; but when they became more fully known, Bartlett, of New York, and many others, found in their manufacture a profitable business.

In 1837 a man known by the name of Doctor Cross commenced the manufacturing of stamped cards in the city of New Orleans, and continued it up to as late as 1854, and it is more than probable that he was the first who carried on the business in this country. He procured his cards in an unfinished state from the New York manufacturers, and stamped them with plates of his own invention, or said to be such, at least. It was after his

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manufactory became perfectly well known that his cards were introduced on steamers, and rung in on the passengers by the bar-keepers, who "stood in" for a share of the plunder thus obtained by the sharpers for whom they operated.

At the present time none but the most verdant will stand "bottom-dealing;" but, like all new frauds, it had its day, with many kindred devices for robbing the unsuspecting. From 1834 to 1840 many gamblers who considered themselves "*par excellence*" in their profession, have stood it nobly while imagining themselves, no doubt, the victims of very bad luck. Almost any person, with a little practice, can deal from the bottom; but to perform the feat while several pairs of keen eyes are concentrating their gaze on your fingers and the pack held by them, without being detected, requires an amount of coolness and nerve, not to mention practice, which is possessed perhaps by not one man in a million. Thirty years ago a No. 1 bottom-dealer was a king among sharpers. He was dependent on no outside assistance for fleecing his victims, and if he had a partner, it was only for the purpose of skinning his dupe more expeditiously, by dealing him a large hand from the bottom, while his partner would raise from his lap or from the joints of his knee one yet larger, with which to beat it.

It is said that bottom-dealing was first brought to perfection by a man named Wilson. This desirable consummation was reached in 1834, and about this time first made its appearance on the western rivers, where it was rendered, in the course of a few years, entirely useless, through the blunders of bungling operators, and the verdant learned to protect themselves against the fraud.

Means swifter and more sure were gradually brought into requisition, for robbing the votaries of chance of their money. It is a strong advantage undoubtedly to know the strength of your adversary's hand at poker; but the work was too tedious for your fast sharper. Luck would sometimes protect a "sucker" against "iteming," stamped cards, and bottom-dealing. In the good old times, before draw-poker became fashionable, straight poker was the favorite brag game. At this game the cards were dealt by the winner of the pool, who could, of course, keep on dealing as often as he could win. This rule enabled the bottom-dealer to help himself to good cards as often as he dealt;

but he might win twenty pools in succession without securing scarcely any money, should his adversaries hold poor hands, and in the meantime one of them might get, by good luck, better cards than those he held, and thus win from him a large stake. True, if he had a partner who was posted in the game he could give the "sucker" a big hand from the bottom, while his partner raised from his lap a bigger one to beat it with, but it was rather dangerous to attempt such a thing too often, and the least bungling was sure to lead to detection.

Young men perfected themselves in the science of false cutting and shuffling "running-up" hands, "palming out" cards, and "ringing them in," ringing in cold packs, double discarding, etc., etc. These ambitious tyros were taken under the fostering care of some patriarch of the sharper tribe, who assisted them in getting up their games and furnished them with money when that article was needed, which, with this kind of sharpeners, was generally the case, when a trip on the river was in prospect.

The popular game of draw-poker, which has entirely superseded straight poker and brag, was the invention of river sharpeners, and was first put in practice on the Mississippi steamboats. This game offers to the manipulator a hundred-fold better facilities for fleecing the unwary than either of the old games. The skillful operator can give his victim, with perfect ease, as many big hands as he chooses, and at the same time arm himself or his partner with better ones to beat them. But a shrewd swindler seldom gives a sucker more than an ace-full. He first tempts his appetite with two large pairs; then threes of various kinds; after these are expended, he hoists him up a flush or a full hand of a small denomination, and gradually increases them in size till he beats an ace-full for him; beyond this he is not likely to go. Whenever they find customers who will not stand running up hands, false shuffling and cutting, double discarding is practiced upon them; an advantage peculiar to draw-poker, and not applicable to any other game. Scores of those who have grown gray in the service of the fickle goddess, and who were the most wary among her votaries, have come to grief through the following artful piece of chicanery: Two partners being seated next each other, one attends to the betting department, while the latter manipulates the cards. He goes out with three aces, we will say for example, which he conceals in the joint of

his knee until it comes his turn to deal. The cards having been dealt, he is ready to help the discarded hands, and he now conveys from their hiding place the stolen cards, in the palm of his hand, and places them upon the top of the pack while in the act of lifting it from the table. These cards are now drawn by his partner, who is informed, by a secret "item," of their denomination, and discards his hand accordingly for their reception. As he has the first "say" or "age," and the other players may perhaps not chip in for the pool, it is not necessary to bring out the hidden cards; that is, if any of the players chip in, then he tries, by making a large brag, to run them out; but should any of them prove obstinate and stand the raise, then the three aces are brought into action. The persons who can perform this trick well are by no means numerous.

The rough handling frequently received by sharpers, at the hands of their victims, during their various pilgrimages up and down the river, finally caused them to be a little more wary, and it was only when the steamer was about to make a wood-pile or some port that they would venture to put the finishing-stroke to their nefarious work, by dealing a big hand to their victim and then beating it for him.

When they had accomplished this they would leave the boat as quickly as convenient, and get upon the next steamer which stopped at their place of sojourn, whether going up or down mattered very little to them; and having leached what "suckers" they found on her, abandoned her, in turn, for another which offered them subjects for plunder.

The gambling talents of short-card sharpers rest exclusively in their fingers; scarcely one of them being capable of playing any square game with even ordinary ability; and the non-professionals in the country, who are greatly their superiors in all short-card games played on the square, may be numbered by thousands. It is in fact a rare thing to find a short-card sharp who has sufficient confidence to risk his money on the square at anything except bucking the tiger, which ravenous animal swallows up most of their ill-gotten plunder. When square faro, a two-card box, women, or kindred articles of commerce have depleted their pockets of their stolen funds, they are ready for another trip on the river, and probably are obliged to fall back on the paternal sharper, who fattens on their skill and industry in their nefarious business, for the "sinews of war."

These thieves became so formidable in their numbers, and so bold in their depredations, as to drive almost everything in the shape of square gambling from the river; and it was only when a party of acquaintances sat down to the card-table, to play among themselves, that anything like a square game could be seen on a steamer. As they were all called professional gamblers, the honest and straightforward of that community had to father their crimes and share their odium. Their rascalities even, bad as they were, were made the themes of marvelous romantic stories by the penny-a-liners and story-tellers of every description. Then the wonderful yarns that have been circulated from time to time by the lovers of the marvelous, relating to the outwitting of gamblers at their own games by determined heroes, who have forced them to disgorge their ill-gotten plunder and make restitution to every one whom they had duped, and many more tales, all equally improbable and without foundation, is all clap-trap. Sharpers are birds of prey, and cannot be outwitted in their line of business. They practice their arts on none but those whom they know will stand them, and can discern at a single glance whether the person seated before them can be cheated at play or otherwise. Should they chance on a tough customer, they drop him immediately, and seek others more suitable to their purpose.

About thirty years ago the following story circulated freely through the public press of this country. I have chosen it out of many of the same kind of delicious morsels which the newspapers have, for forty years, delighted to dish up to their readers, and with which marvelous story-tellers have amused their hearers. The tale, on its own merits, will compare most favorably with those of that wonderful hero, Baron Munchausen.

"The news having reached the ears of a party of gamblers that a New Orleans bank was about to send to Vicksburg an agent having in his possession \$95,000 to discharge a claim in that city, they followed him on board the New Orleans and Vicksburg packet with the intention of robbing him. During the trip he was induced by them to take part in a game of poker, and furnished with a large betting hand; but they did not omit, at the same time, to generously give a member of their own gang one with which to beat it. Several small brags were made by the contestants for the pool, when the agent went \$250

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better than his opponent, which was all the money belonging to himself which he had about him. This was seen, and a brag of \$5,000 more was made by his adversary. The agent claimed a sight for his \$250, stating that it was all the money he had; but it was refused. The object of the scoundrels being to induce him to break into the package belonging to the bank, which they knew to be in his possession, shrewdly thinking if he once did so they would not only obtain the \$5,000 on the brag, but all the rest of its contents. On the refusal of his adversary to allow him a sight, he had appealed to the other members of the party, who decided that he must call the \$5,000 or forfeit all claims to the pool. He again appealed to his opponent for a sight, but was informed by that inexorable gentleman that if he did not call the \$5,000 brag within five minutes he should take down the pool. The five minutes were fast ebbing away, amid the breathless stillness of both the actors in the game and the spectators, when the agent, as a '*dernier resort*,' determined to save his money from the clutches of the swindlers, took from his bosom the package belonging to the bank and threw it on the table, saying, 'I'll see your five thousand and go you ninety thousand better, and if you don't call the bet in five minutes I shall take down the pool.' The ruse was so unexpected that it completely upset their calculations, and not having sufficient money to call the brag they were compelled to forfeit all claims to the pool, according to their own ruling, and the agent swept it into his pockets, amidst the cheers of the bystanders."

This foolish tale was swallowed with avidity by the credulous, and every word as implicitly believed as if it were holy writ, and the imaginary bank-agent became a public hero. No law except that of might denies to a player at a poker-table a sight for what money he has before him, and it is rather improbable that a set of sharpers would dream of perpetrating such a robbery in so public a place, when they knew it would be impossible for them to escape with their plunder. Sharpers are much too shrewd for such bungling work. They take no chances to lose six or seven thousand dollars, nor two or three hundred dollars, nor even twenty dollars, at a hand of cards. As for the tales regarding the fabulous sums bet at poker-tables on our western rivers, they are all pure humbug. I have grave doubts whether a brag of two thousand dollars has ever been



lost and won at a card-table on the Mississippi River, since the steamer *Pennsylvania* descended that stream in 1813.

Though railways have diverted a large portion of the travel from our western waters, and consequently thinned out somewhat the horde of sharpers who formerly infested the river steamers, they are still numerous, and still find fools to prey upon; for the crop, unlike more useful harvests, never fails. But the exploits of the noble army of "*chevaliers d'industrie*" are by no means confined to water navigation. Not at all! They are to be found in every city, town, and village, where short-card playing for gain makes up a portion of the pastime of the few or the many, and sufficient money is hazarded to attract their cupidity. Some are satisfied with quick gains and small profits, while others of the class are willing to wait months, in anticipation of taking in a big pile. They can be found of all degrees, from the lowest and most vicious, up to the most enlightened circles of card-players, plying their calling, and among every class find plenty of fools to batten on. Among these short-card sharpers are shrewd and discerning men of persuasive powers and agreeable manners, who, having finished their education on the river, and becoming older and more settled in character, they seek more respectable and profitable fields for their labor, among the upper classes whose card circles are held in private club-rooms or apartments in first-class hotels. Into those hallowed precincts, where none bearing the name of gambler are allowed to enter, designing men who are identified with mercantile pursuits, or some of the professions, easily obtain admittance. Many of these worthy and immaculate gentlemen have been carefully brought up in the paths of morality; some are highly cultured and refined; but in life's breathless struggle for possessions, their perceptions of right and wrong have become so distorted that they look upon the fleecing of a verdant at a card-table as an admirable piece of finesse. When their own skill has become worn out upon their unsuspecting adversaries of the green table, they manage to foist upon them some one of the more skillful experts of their acquaintance; perhaps under some military title, or perhaps will tack to their names the handle of Professor, Doctor, or Honorable. These latter, having once obtained a foothold in the ranks of respectability, endeavor to sustain it by every means in their power, and are

most careful to commit no act which might draw upon them the slightest suspicion. Being unable, from their very composition, to support the pangs of a losing, one of them is seldom seen within the doors of a gambling-house, nor under any circumstances would they countenance a professional gambler, or speak to him on the street, and never fail to warn their verdant gulls against the association of such disreputable characters.

The question will naturally arise, Is there any cure for this crying evil? My answer is emphatically, *Yes!* Make cheating at the card-table a felony, punishable by the laws of the land, and card-sharpers and their insidious accomplices will disappear like hoar-frost before the morning sun. So long as the legislatures refuse to make stringent laws for shielding verdant card-players, so long will they be the legitimate prey of sharpers.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

### THREE-CARD MONTE THROWERS

Are the worst Pariahs who prey upon society under the cloak of gambling. During the last five and twenty years they have infested our steamers and railways, and every place of public gathering, for the purpose of practicing their arts upon the unsuspecting and the unwary. These pests outnumber the short-card sharpers on our western waters four to one. The latter claim with the former no affinity, and say they have destroyed all short-card playing on the rivers by their three-card operations. Socially, they look down upon them much as a first-class burglar might look down on some petty thief, at the same time claiming that their own vocation is legitimate, and based upon the true principles of science. For the life of me I cannot see where this nice discrimination comes in. To attain pre-eminence as a three-card thrower, seems to me as difficult as to become a first-class short-card sharp, and about equally meritorious. In order to attain pre-eminence in either of these roles, one must possess a self-possession nothing can shake, nerves of iron, dex-

terity of hand, quickness of perception, and cool judgment; should he lack a single one of these qualities, he would be a bungler, and entirely unfit for his calling. Viewing both these professions in a moral light, they stand on about the same footing, and we must conclude that both are legitimate in the eyes of the law, since none of our legislatures have made any efforts towards their suppression or punishment.

At what period we were first blessed with this ingenious little game with three cards, I am utterly unable to say; but that we are indebted for the boon to Mexico, on whose soil it first originated, is unquestionable. At the time we invaded that country, it burst the narrow limits formerly confining it, and went on "conquering and to conquer," until it is now probably known to the entire English-speaking population of the globe. It made its appearance in the city of New Orleans as early as 1837, and at once became popular with the sharpers as an ingenious device for ridding the verdant of their superfluous cash. In the above-named year we find that one Phillips was in that city convicted and sentenced two years in the penitentiary for relieving a man of \$700 at the three-card game. The offense was pressed under the head of larceny, and from the time of that conviction, three-card throwers did not show up in Louisiana, or in fact in any other State in the Union, until about the breaking out of the Mexican war.

Amongst all the followers of Taylor's and Scott's armies, not a single three-card thrower could be found; but numbers of the Mexican tribe, following that ingenious calling, gradually found their way among the troops, where they plied their vocation among the wagon trains or in the public streets, whenever they could do so without danger of interference from the Mexican authorities. By the Mexican gamblers they were styled *ladrones* (thieves), and many years previous to our invasion of the country were all known to its inhabitants. They followed up feasts, were to be found in the market-places of large cities, and in fact at all sorts of public gatherings wherever a crowd assembled.

They were not permitted openly to ply their vocation, but carried on their business much as the three-card sharpers of England operate at the present time. Whenever they were dragged before an *Alcalde*, and the fact of their having robbed

any person at their little game was proven against them, they were compelled to refund the plunder and pay a fine of two ounces (\$32) or stand committed to work for two months in the chain-gang.

While in Saltillo, during the summer of 1847, I recollect seeing one of these fellows. He was called Pancho, and if he ever had any other name, no one seemed to be aware of the fact, and I am sure I never ascertained it. He was scarcely twenty years old, but, young as he was, I doubt if he ever had a superior in tossing about the three cards. His dexterity at the business was truly wonderful. Having collected in this manner, from the American citizens and soldiers about the camp of Buena Vista and in the City of Saltillo, something like \$5,000, he made a match game with a dragoon of the regulars. They each put up \$3,000, the whole to be played for until won. The conditions of the game were that Pancho should throw with American cards and the dragoon do the guessing. The latter "rung in" stamped cards upon his adversary, which was a little too high-strung for Pancho, who, losing his money, imagined doubtless that he had "*muy malo suerte*."

In the early days of California the country was overrun with these three-card throwers and their confederates. Among them were Americans, Englishmen, and Mexicans, and, with the exception of a single German, all the three-card throwers I have ever met were composed of these nationalities. Wherever a fellow could be discovered capable of throwing three cards, the sharpers immediately brought him to the front. These light-fingered gentry could be found plying their calling in every city and mining camp of any importance in the State. In the streets of San Francisco and Sacramento, numbers of them might be seen any day seated on the sidewalk, throwing their cards, as well as in every vile den with which those cities then abounded. It was truly wonderful where all the fools on whom they preyed came from, for in those days they found plenty. When the State licensed gambling it made three-card throwing, strop-playing, thimble-rigging, and kindred games a felony, and from that time forth was comparatively free of these pests.

The numbers of three-card throwers in England is something marvelous, especially in and around London. Not a single train leaves that city which does not carry with it a gang of three-

card throwers. They prowl around the different railway stations, carefully inspecting each passenger, and, as if by instinct, can tell instantly the pigeon from the hawk. Liberally feeling the officials, they are furnished with duplicate keys to the carriage doors, and by that means can, if desirable, change their carriage at every station. Immediately upon the starting of the train they open their little game, and by the time it arrives at another station they leave the carriage then occupied for another, unless they have succeeded in finding customers for whose benefit it will pay them to remain. They roam from carriage to carriage in search of prey until the train reaches its destination. At race-meetings, and along the roads leading to the courses, they can be seen huddled together in knots, where perhaps the operator has spread his coat upon the green sward, and is tossing about his cards in hopes some passer-by may be attracted by it, to give him a bet; while at the same time half a dozen cappers are giving him every possible assistance, by voice and action, while in the distance are posted sentinels, to give the alarm in case the intruding feet of a policeman approaches, whose duty it is to arrest them when found plying their vocation.

To conduct any banking game of chance is, according to the laws of England, a felony, with the single exception of those at Newmarket during race-meetings at that place, which are permitted and are exempt from punishment by special act of Parliament. All public games played like three-card monte, strap-games, etc., are misdemeanors, and are punishable by one or two months in the House of Correction. These, however, are infringed upon, especially around race-meetings, daily; and magistrates are very slow to enforce them, as public opinion regards the penalties as being much too severe for the offense. But the police break up these games wherever found, and should the conductor of such a game be hauled up before a magistrate by one of his victims, for the purpose of regaining the money lost to him, it is generally refunded, on condition that the complaint be withdrawn. Should the complainant, however, press his charge against one of these sharps, he will get three months in the House of Correction, but on an average not a case of the kind occurs annually.

A person who is convicted of playing scratched or loaded dice, or of secreting cards upon his person while playing for money,

or in any manner cheating his adversary at play where money is at stake, is sentenced to a felon's cell for a term of years. The offenses just enumerated are not a whit more grave than that of the three-card thrower; but as all the lawyers in England could not convict him of cheating, except his cappers gave voluntary evidence against him, and as all stand equally in danger of the law, it is not likely such a thing would occur once in a century. The reason why the three-card thrower evades punishment is because there is no special act making three-card throwing a felony, and justice is unable to fix his guilt upon him.

For many years after the conviction of Phillips, not a single three-card thrower was to be found in New Orleans, at least in any of the public places. Those *chevaliers d'industrie* who plied their vocation there did so with the greatest secrecy and caution; and only among the initiated in cock-pits, and in those low dens of vice at the swamps or down at Lake Pontchartrain, and more often along the flat-boat landing, would be chosen as the theatre of their operations. Their subjects were principally strangers, who were less likely to make complaints than residents, before the police courts, and unlikely to remain in the city during the sickly months, to prosecute. At the commencement of the Mexican war New Orleans resembled nothing so much as a beleaguered city, except that troops were either leaving or arriving there daily. Thieves and sharpers of every description flocked there to follow their nefarious business, and while the excitement lasted, sharpening of every description flourished boldly and went scot-free. Among others, the three-card throwers, finding that justice slept and fools were plentiful, emerged from their temporary eclipse, and began once more to ply their vocation, with none to molest or make them afraid. No longer was it necessary for them to seek out hidden places in which to perform their villainies; but they were to be met with on the levee, in bar-rooms, and even at the public balls. Finally they took possession of the cabins of the river steamers, and captains who, but a few months previously, would have set a man ashore, if not caused him to be lynched, whom they caught throwing three cards on their steamers, were compelled to confess that a new era had dawned, and that the legitimacy of three-card monte was established. From that, to them, auspicious day,

to this, the three-card monte sharps have been following up our lines of travel throughout the country, robbing the verdant with perfect impunity. From travelers on our western rivers have they derived their greatest profits. Many of the captains of packets leaving the ports of St. Louis and New Orleans stood in with the sharpers, receiving from the thieves one-third of the money which they plundered from the passengers.

On an evening after leaving port, the supper-table having been cleared, a table was placed in the social hall, and the manipulator commenced business, assisted by a half-dozen or so of cappers. This party having cleaned out all the verdant fools which they could find, then left the steamer at the first landing, and took the next boat back to the city; or perhaps they would continue up or down the river, as the case might be, boarding a boat, and, after fleecing what dupes they might discover on her, leave her at the first landing, taking the next that came along and working her the same way, and so on *ad infinitum*.

After opening their game they could tell in a few moments whether there were any subjects aboard worthy of their attention; and so long as they had hopes of dragging a victim to the shambles, so long would they remain; but when the hope was lost, the boat was immediately abandoned.

Three-card monte is in appearance a very simple game, and the manner of throwing the cards in a straight game is easily learned in a few minutes. The sharper takes three cards between the fingers of his right hand; the cards being, we will say, two red ones and a black one. He shows the faces of these to the company and throws them down back upwards on a table, the ground, or whatever substitute he uses for a table, saying, "I'll bet \$10, \$20, or \$50, as the case may be, that no one here can pick up the black card." This game, when played on the square, is two to one in favor of the person throwing the cards; but it was never created for a fair game of chance, even in that respect, but as a cunning device for robbing and swindling such persons as are only willing to risk their money on a dead-sure thing. The rapidity with which the cards are tossed about by the sharper confuses the sight of the bystanders, and it is the policy of the former to make his dupes believe that such is the true principle of the game. Were he satisfied to let the matter rest on this basis, with two to one in his favor, he could hardly

lose, but he would have only the veriest fools for antagonists, and would, besides, lose more than two-thirds of his most valuable customers. It is the dread of losing which deters the opponents of gambling from risking their money at the card-table. Show them where they can be assured of always winning, and they will jump at it with the alacrity of a cat pouncing upon a mouse; point out to them a "dead-sure thing," and their conscientious scruples will vanish like fog before the scorching beams of a summer sun. I have seen in California, lousy miners, too stingy to pay for a bath or a shave, pull out a bag of gold-dust equivalent to several hundred dollars, and bet it on the turning over of a card at three-card monte, with an eagerness which was surprising, till one reflects that they believed they had a dead certainty of winning, as much as they believed in the certainty of their own existence. At the same time not one in ten of them would hazard his money on a square game of any description, or an even chance of any kind. These are the characters who feed the three-card monte throwers, strop-players, thimble-riggers, and pocket-book droppers, with others of their ilk; it is the greed of gain that tempts them, and they are entirely unworthy of sympathy.

Three-card monte is a deception, and herein lies the success of the fraud. Every motion of the sharper's tongue and fingers is a deception while tossing about his cards for the luring within his toils of a victim; and to aid him in its consummation, five or six cappers are making sham bets and in this manner keep up the play so long as there is any hope of inveigling a victim. A bystander who expresses by words, signs or looks, that he is capable of picking out the desired card, is instantly frozen to by one of the cappers, and no artifice will be left untried to induce him to part with his money. Since the first introduction of the trick among us, many skillful baits have been introduced into it to catch fools. The original device for this purpose was to bend down a corner of the winning card, which was usually accomplished in the following manner: While the sharper is tossing his cards about, the cappers, in order to distract his attention, get up a sham fight, or one of them touches him on the shoulder in order to induce him to look around—a play which he performs with much alacrity; and while the first whispers in his ear, a second capper bends the corner of the winning card, taking care



that its face be distinctly seen by the "gull" looking on. The sharper, recommencing to throw his cards, of course never discerns the bend on the card on which he wishes to bet, nor for a moment sees that it has a rather deformed appearance, as he wagers his money that no one present can pick it up. He, unsuspecting soul, throws his cards down on the table, crying, "I'll bet fifty or one hundred dollars that no one can pick out the black card," and the same black card is thrown, face upwards, on the table, so that all may see its face, as well as the bend in its corner. But now, when he gives his "finishing shuffle," as he calls it, preparatory to taking the offered wagers, he passes the cards back and forward between his fingers, and quick as thought straightens the bended corner of the winner into its former shape, while at the same instant another finger bends up the corner of another card; the three cards are now laid side by side, one having a bended corner, and the sharper is now ready to take bets to any amount that no person can select the winning card from its two fellows.

At the present day a speck of grain of sand is more commonly used. The sharper selects for his game three new cards of spotless purity, save the print and a small black speck on the back of one, no larger than a pin's head; this of course being the winning card. The capper of course drops on this mark, and follows it up by winning two or more straight bets on it. But he is not so selfish as to keep the golden secret solely to himself; the attention of the "gulls" is called in that direction by the generous fellow, in order that they may get a little of the "chicken pie." The sharper, keeping a sharp look-out whenever he sees one of his dupes having his money ready to back the spotted card, gives the cards a gentle shuffle, at the same moment wiping off the grain of sand, which adheres to the ball of one of the fingers of his right hand, while with one of the fingers of his left hand he plants a similar speck on the back of one of the others. So dexterously and rapidly does he perform this little piece of leger-de-main that the eyes of his own cappers are unable to detect the trick. All the world and his wife would not induce the "gull" to believe he has not a dead-sure thing on that card, and on the strength of his belief he sizes up all his money. But should craven fear seize him, and caution him to risk but a portion of his money, the operator is suddenly seized with the notion that

all" looking on. The of course never dis-ishes to bet, nor for a ed appearance, as he ick it up. He, unsus-able, crying, "I'll bet n pick out the black face upwards, on the as the bend in its cor- g shuffle," as he calls s, he passes the cards nd quick as thought inner into its former finger bends up the are now laid side by sharper is now ready on can select the win-

nd is more commonly ree new cards of spot- ck speck on the back ource being the win- t a mark, and follows s it. But he is not ly to himself; the at- ction by the generous of the "chicken pie." whenever he sees one of the spotted card, gives moment wiping off the of one of the fingers of ers of his left hand he of the others. So dex- s little piece of leger- s are unable to detect not induce the "gull" a that card, and on the s money. But should o risk but a portion of d with the notion that

he will only take bets of a certain amount, and on no account will he take one of less; the "gull" is forced to hazard his all, and should he not have a sufficiency of money to make up that amount, some of those accommodating gentlemen, the cappers, will take the balance, just to see the bet come off.

I have never yet in my life seen an elderly person throwing three cards; the tribe is composed exclusively of young men, or those in the prime of life, and all belonging to the ignorant and uncultivated class; it being an exceedingly rare thing to see one of gentlemanly exterior or manners and habits. The ruffian predominates largely among them, and it is impossible for them to disguise the fact. None of them ever have, that I know of, shown any aptitude for card-playing, and whatever gambling they do is playing against faro or other banking games. Not a few of them are roped in for victims of the two-card boxes, and there fleeced. These, with the assistance of lewd women and extravagant habits, strip from the mass of them their ill-gotten gains. Still, there have been among the tribe, individuals who could not be induced to hazard their money at any sort of gaming whatever; and these have, after a few years, retired with a sufficient competency, and turned respectable. I have already mentioned that every three-card thrower is accompanied by a retinue of five or more cappers, who usually receive from him a small percentage on whatever plunder is obtained. These are of the lowest and most despicable order of human beings, and are similar in habits and social status to those employed by the lower order of brace-houses to cap their games.

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

## THE HOG-DROVER.

In the summer of 1858 I chanced to be a passenger on board the steamer Robert P. Hale, bound from Louisville to New Orleans. We left Memphis in the evening, having taken on board at that place a cargo of three-card sharpers. The supper-table being cleared, the chief manipulator, a tall, hungry-looking specimen of humanity, with long dark hair and a sanctimonious-looking face, caused one of the card-tables to be arranged for him in the social hall. Having taken from his coat-pocket a pack of cards, he placed them on the table before him and commenced drumming up customers in somewhat the following strain: "Come this way, gentlemen; I'm agoin' ter show yer a trick I was robbed at a few days ago, whilst I was on ther bote goin' home from Memphis, by a rascally set o' three-card monte sharpers. Them scoundrels is allers travelin' on steamboats fur ter swindle ther passengers. They've robbed me, and I'm goin' ter expose 'em every chance I gits. Come up, gentlemen, an' I'll show yer how they does it. It's the dooty of everybody to know how to protect hisself. So come this way, gentlemen; yer can't lose nothin' by learnin'." This appeal had the desired effect, and in a few moments the orator was surrounded by an attentive audience, if not an admiring one.

He then selected from the pack three cards, which he bent sideways between his fingers, and then threw them face upwards upon the table, saying, "Gentlemen, here's the eight o' clubs, the eight o' spades, and the queen o' hearts. The queen o' hearts, gentlemen, is the winning card. Now, gentlemen, this ere trick may be simple to you, but the scoundrels robbed me of a hundred dollars at it, an' they shan't cheat nobody else ef I kin help it. Now, gentlemen, keep yer eyes on the keards. I'm a going ter fix 'em as them fellows fixed 'em fur me. The winning keard is ther queen o' hearts; don't forget it, gentlemen."

The manipulator tossed his cards backwards and forwards between his fingers in rather a clumsy manner, after which he left the three resting side by side before him on the table. Then looking around on his audience, he said, "Thar's the trick,

gentlemen." A perfect stillness prevailed. His audience did not display any emotional or other signs that their mental faculties were greatly improved by his exposition.

"What's the trick?" inquired a tall capper, standing in the outward circle, and peering over the heads of the bystanders between himself and the table.

"Thar it is," reiterated the manipulator, pointing his index finger at the three cards. "Yer see they bet me a hundred dollars I couldn't pick out the queen o' hearts, and I didn't; an' that's ther way as how they stole my money from me."

"Ch——t!" swore the tall capper who had before spoken, still peering over the heads of the crowd. "I thought after all his fuss that feller was goin' to show us somethin' new."

"It was new enough fur me to lose my hundred dollars at, Mister," replied the manipulator, tartly.

"Ye said they cheated ye, didn't yer?" demanded a diminutive, pinched-faced individual, standing at a corner of the table, attentively regarding the operator, with both hands thrust into the pockets of his pantaloons, and who was also a capper of the concern.

"That's what I said, an' I sticks to it," responded the manipulator.

"Well, how did they cheat?" again demanded the diminutive gentleman.

"Didn't I tell yer they bet me a hundred dollars I couldn't pick up the queen o' hearts?"

"An' ye bet 'em?" said the under-sized gentleman.

"Uv course I did, an' lost."

"Of course he did and lost," mimicked the tall capper. "Had he happened to pick up the right card and won, then them fellers wouldn't a' been thieves—oh no! I guess not!" he exclaimed, a broad grin expanding over his countenance.

"Well," cried the operator, evidently lashed up by the taunts of the tall individual, "I knows the game's a swindle because nobody couldn't pick out the queen, an' them there cussed rascals wouldn't a' bet me, only they knowed I couldn't a' picked it up."

"I'll bet you a hundred dollars I can pick the queen out o' them three cards, Mister," said the small man.

"Not with me, stranger," replied the manipulator; "no more

o' my money goes that there way; I ain't here ter gamble, but ter expose a fraud, an' I bets no more money with nobody."

At this stage of the proceedings a fine-looking fellow, fashionably attired, with a superabundance of diamond studs twinkling in the bosom of his shirt, and a large gold chain around his neck, attached to a watch in his vest pocket, not to mention a profusion of other jewelry which he carried about him, cried, "I'll take that bet!" All eyes were now centred on the fashionable-looking stranger, who elbowed his way through the crowd that surrounded the table, until he stood immediately in front of it. Taking from the inside pocket of his vest a large bundle of bank notes he pulled from it a hundred dollar bill, which he flung carelessly on the table, at the same time casting his eyes towards the diminutive gentleman, and saying, "Cover that if you think you can turn over the queen of hearts."

"Thar's my soap!" replied the person addressed, bringing his hand out from his breeches pockets, and flinging upon the table five twenty-dollar gold pieces.

"Pick her up, then, an' the money's yours!" said the fashionably-dressed stranger.

The little man reached over and picked up one of the cards and turned it face upwards. It was the eight of spades. His defeat was greeted with uproarious laughter from the crowd, who by this time had become exceedingly interested in the proceedings.

"I'll give you a chance to get even, sir," said the winner to his defeated adversary.

"All right!" said that gentleman, going back into his breeches pocket and bringing forth five more double eagles, addressing the operator with, "Shuffle up yer tricks, Mister."

That person complied according to the most approved method, and laid out the three cards, ready for the hazard. The little gentleman again essayed to find her majesty of hearts among the three cards, but with no better success than before, having this time flopped over the eight of clubs. The second time was his discomfiture hailed with a shout of derision from those assembled around the table.

"I'll go you again," said the winning gentleman, hauling in the stakes.

"No more o' that there thieving game fur me," cried the lit-

the man, thrusting both hands into his breeches pockets as far as practicable, and staring at the three cards as if he had an appetite to eat them up.

"I'll go yer a hundred fur a flyer," now sung out another capper, who up to this moment had remained a silent spectator of the scene.

"There's my money," responded the well-dressed stranger, carelessly throwing upon the table five of the gold pieces he had taken in from the diminutive gentleman.

"I object ter throwin' these here keards enny more, gentlemen. I ain't here to assist gamblin', but ter expose roguery," said the manipulator, gathering up his cards and returning them to his coat pocket.

"Yer ain't bettin', air ye?" demanded the little man, fiercely, with his arms still thrust to his elbows into his pantaloons. "Shake up yer keards; mebbo I'll get a chance ter git even," he added in an undertone.

"Go on! go on!" shouted all the cappers with one voice, to which several of the disinterested bystanders added theirs. Such an unanimous appeal could not of course be resisted, and the operator again placed his cards on the table and selected from the pack three new ones, and showing their faces to the bystanders there appeared the trois of clubs, the trois of spades, and a king of hearts. He gave the three cards a "Grecian bend," tossed them about on the table a few times, saying as he did so:

"Gentlemen, the king of hearts is the winnin' keard; remember that, gentlemen!" then suddenly stopping in his work, he made an appeal to his auditors in the following fashion: "Gentlemen, I'm a poor man, an' I hope yer'll throw in sumthin' ter pay my expenses. I only wants enough, gentlemen, ter pay my way home; an' I knows as how yer don't want me ter work here fur nuthin'."

"That there man's all the winner; let 'im give yer sunthin', he kin well afford it," said the diminutive gentleman, savagely, pointing over at the man with the gold chain and diamond studs.

To this gentleman the manipulator now turned, and in a whining voice asked him to give him ten dollars to pay his passage.

"Not a cent!" replied that gentleman, coolly, not in the slightest degree moved by this pathetic appeal. "I'm not giving anything away to-night."

"Then I'm darned if I work fur ennybody fur nuthins," retorted his worthy petitioner, gathering up his cards.

"Go on! Throw the cards, an' if I win this 'ere bet I'll pay yer passage," shouted the capper who had proposed to go a hundred against the well-dressed gentleman.

"And I'll give you all the liquor you want to drink," chimed in the well-dressed party; "and by the way, I'll treat the crowd now," he added. "Here, bar-keeper, come and see what these gentlemen want."

The attentive vender of alcoholics was immediately on hand, and several of the bystanders drank at the expense of the gentleman with the jewelry, not forgetting at the same time to drink to his success.

"I never drinks," whined the sanctimonious card-thrower in a voice of a dolorous pitch, when pressed to do so by the generous winner. "An' I think it's real mean an' stingy o' yer not ter give me a trifle fer my trouble."

"Well, if I give to anybody I'll remember you first," was the answer he received.

The manipulator having again shuffled up his cards, spread them on the table, when there appeared upon the back of one of them a little dark speck, scarcely larger than a small pin-head.

"Here's my hundred!" cried the capper, flinging a roll of bills upon the table.

The party with the jewelry opened out the roll, and having found it quite correct, placed on it the five double eagles, and addressing his opponent, said, "Pick out the king o' hearts and it's all yourn, stranger." The capper reached over and turned over a trois, and the derisive laughter of the bystanders made the boat ring again, and again the well-dressed party raked down the money.

Up to this time none of the suckers had bitten at the bait, though it seemed mighty tempting to some of them, and all appeared to be enjoying the sport hugely. Some of them, as the cards were turned over by the losers, expressed to each other their convictions that they could have knocked the centre out of the winning card without fall. Among these latter was a short, thick-set fellow of nervous, restless temperament, by profession a hog-drover, and from Southern Kentucky. He had

brought on board at Smithland a large number of the porcine tribe, who were at present accommodated on the lower deck of the steamer, and with which he was on his way to the New Orleans market. He did not seem to relish the clumsy way in which the cappers repeatedly turned over the wrong card, when it seemed perfectly easy to him to pick out the winner. He even went so far as to admonish the second capper, when his hand was on the trois, that that was not the right card, for which liberty he was politely admonished by one of the jewelry, who begged him remember that he was not hazarding his money on the united opinions of two persons. The drover did not seem to relish the reprimand much, but held his peace, nevertheless. To this individual the tall capper immediately froze. His lips were constantly in the closest possible proximity to his ear, where they kept up a constant buzzing, and no sooner were fresh cards produced than his eye lighted on the black speck on the winner. Such a discovery his unselfish nature would not permit himself alone to monopolize; he at once imparted the discovery to the drover. The manipulator, throwing his cards face upwards on the table, in order that all may see their faces, the astute capper makes the astonishing discovery that the card whose back bears the black speck is the king of hearts, the winning card, and he secretly calls the attention of his friend to the coincidence. The eyes of the hog-man began to expand, his body became more restless than ever, and had it not been for the restraining hand of the capper, it is hard to tell what he might not have done, or how far his indiscretion would have led him. He had already warned the capper that he was about to turn over the wrong paper, and been admonished by the jeweled gentleman as I have related, when he was pulled aside by the tall capper, who gave him a good buzzing. On the return of the pair to the table, the manipulator was stirring about his "papers," and crying, "Two trois and a king, gentlemen; the king is the winning keard, gentlemen; make yer bets," etc.

"Two hundred dollars!" said the capper who had lost the preceding bet, throwing upon the table a roll of bills.

"I'll bet a hundred on yer," exclaimed the little gentleman with his hands in his breeches pockets, hastily withdrawing one with five more double eagles, which he threw upon the table and immediately returned his hand to its former place.



"Who's to pick out the card?" inquired the fashionably-dressed worthy.

"I'm a bettin' on that man's pick," rejoined the small man, pointing to the man who had thrown down the roll of bills.

"All taken," was the laconic reply of the well-dressed gentleman, laying down three hundred dollars.

"Well, can't I bet a hundred, too, on my own pick?" demanded the tall capper.

"As much as you want," was the reply of the man of diamonds.

The tall capper now threw on the table a hundred dollar bill, and without heeding the hog-drover, who was plucking him by the sleeve in an excited manner, for the purpose of bespeaking his attention to some communication he desired to make, said, laying his hand on the marked card, "This goes for my money."

"All right," replied the party taking the bets. "What card do you choose?" he inquired, turning to the other gentleman; the person addressed reached over and put his hand on what proved to be a trois.

"Turn them over, gentlemen," drawled he of the diamond studs, lazily. Both cards were turned over at the same instant. The tall capper picked up his two hundred, and said, with a laugh, "I'm quite a lunatic at this game."

The gentleman who was the loser of the two hundred bore it with the utmost nonchalance; but not the diminutive gentleman. He could no longer restrain his passion. As soon as he saw the man upon whom he had bet turn over a trois, he brought his fist down on the table with a force which made everything ring again, crying out, "D—n the infernal thieving game; no gentleman oughter play at it unless he wants ter lose his money and be swindled."

"Didn't I tell yer 'twas a thievin' game? But yer wouldn't b'leeve me," exclaimed the manipulator.

"I wish you was in h—l with it, before you ever brought it here," roared the exasperated little man.

"Gentlemen who cannot afford to lose oughn't to play," said the capper who had lost two hundred. "Mix yer cards ag'in, ole feller," he continued, addressing the manipulator at the table, "an' I'll make another flyer." That person did as requested.

The tall capper and the hog-man here appeared to have a little "unpleasantness," the latter feeling somewhat aggrieved that he had not had a chance offered to bet in with the other when he won the hundred dollars.

"Why didn't yer say so at the start, an' I'd a' let yer in with it in a minute," the tall capper would say.

"I tried ter speak ter yer, but yer wouldn't hear me," the hog-fancier would reply. He was, however, soon pacified by his lengthy friend, who took him one side and held a short consultation with him, when both returned in great anxiety to the table, where the manipulator was again laying out his cards.

"Shuffle 'em again, Mister," cried the tall capper. The man complied with his request, and then tossed the cards face upwards upon the table, saying (at the same time pointing at the king of hearts), "That's the winning card. Remember, gentlemen," he would repeat, as he turned it about in his fingers, in order that the victim might see distinctly that the card with the black speck was the king of hearts. Having mixed them to his satisfaction, he laid the three cards side by side, crying, "All ready, gentlemen, make yer bets." There was the round black speck on the back of the king of hearts, as prominent to the eyes of the drover as a blazing star.

"Let's try 'im with a flyer of five hundred," said the tall capper to his "gull."

"I'm thar," responded the drover, going to the inside pocket of his coat, from whence he produced a large leathern pocket-book and took from its contents \$250, while the tall capper produced \$250 more to put with it.

"Size up ter that if yer want ter sport!" said that worthy to the well-dressed gentleman.

"It's your next play," responded the individual addressed, covering the money.

"Up with it, my boy!" said the tall capper, slapping the drover on the back with his hands. The latter reached eagerly forward and raised the card bearing the speck, and on turning it up to his astonished gaze, its face found it to be the trois of clubs instead of the confidently expected "king of hearts."

"What the h—l hev yer done?" demanded the tall capper; "ye've throwed me off! I know all about it!"

The drover was by far too stupefied to have made him any re-

ply, and made no resistance when the tall capper led him from the crowd and walked out to the guards of the boat.

Anxious to learn the next move, I cautiously followed the precious pair, and overhauled them standing near one of the chimnies, and the noise made by the machinery of the boat, together with the pitchy darkness of the night, enabled me to get within hearing distance without being observed by them. I was just in time to hear the excited voice of the hog-drover asserting, "I tell yer I warn't mistaken! It was that card had the speck on 't."

"No! no! no! You were so d—n skeered you didn't know what yer were about," said the capper, in a cold, calm tone.

"But I tell yer I warn't mistaken! Couldn't be!" reiterated his friend.

"You think you warn't, but yer was; mistaken enough ter throw me off fur two hundred and fifty dollars, and it served me right, too, fur not turning over the keard myself."

"But I *couldn't* be mistaken," persisted the drover.

"Oh, yer made a bungle of it, that's what's the matter; but it's no use cryin' for the money. I'm goin' ter get mine back."

"But how?"

"Ef you dusn't want nothin' ter du with it I'll take it all myself; but if yer'll du what I want, we'll make all the money we want in there."

"How?" again queried his friend.

"I guess p'raps you don't want nuthin' ter du with it; so I'll jest go it alone," said the capper, raising his voice to a higher pitch than usual.

"I'm yer man! Go in! I'm with yer!" exclaimed the drover, excitedly.

"I'm afeard if I trust you you'll make another bungle on 't, though I don't see how you can do it, very well."

"Bet yer life I won't make no more mistakes."

"Well then, you do as I tell yer, an' we'll break that feller in there, cos he'll lose every dollar, an' them dimons too, ef we kin beat 'im."

"Go in! I'm with yer!" reiterated the bold hog-man.

"Well, that's settled, now to business. That there feller that throws ther cards allers lifts 'em high up from the table when he gives 'em the last shuffle. I noticed it two or three times, an' come near gettin' behind 'im on purpose, but I'm too big fur such

kind work, an' they'd catch me at it, and that 'd spoil everything. Now you're jest the right size to work that way, an' while you're squattin' down ter get a peep, I'll talk ter them fellers across the table, and keep their attention off you. Dy'e think yer can keep cool enough ter work this business?"

"Bet yer life on 't!" replied the man of hogs, enthusiastically.

"Ef yer du we'll slaughter that feller right there! I'll break 'im the minute yer give me the sign."

"I'll give it ter yer all right, jest as true as ye sees them there trees on that bank!" said the redoubtable hog-fancier, waving his hands towards the vegetable matter in question.

"Then you go right in now, an' I'll come directly. We mustn't give them fellers a chance to suspect anything."

The table was still surrounded, and the cappers were keeping up a lively betting among themselves when I returned to the saloon. The operator had changed his cards for fresh ones, and was now manipulating two black fives and a Jack of diamonds; not a speck was to be seen on their backs. The drover took up his position behind the card-thrower, who was throwing his "papers" lively now, and singing out briskly, "There kin be no mistake, gentlemen; there's two black fives and the Jack of diamonds; ef you lift it, gentlemen, you'll win. A red Jack! The Jack o' dments, gentlemen, remember that! Here we go fur the last time! Keep yer eyes on the keards, gentlemen. All said!" At the close of this preamble, he moved his cards very slowly, and lifted them four or five inches above the table, so that the stooping hog-drover had no difficulty in seeing the faces of all of them, more especially the Jack of diamonds, which he followed with his eye until he saw it placed between the two other cards. There it was, as surely as his own hogs were grunting on the deck below. As he arose from his stooping position, his weather-beaten face was blanched to a deadly pallor. He turned it toward the tall capper, who was attentively watching him, and made a significant sign, as much as to say, "All right." "I'll go you five hundred dollars this time," bawled out that worthy to the well-dressed man, who was at that instant deeply immersed in calculating the amount of money before him, and took no heed of the offer.

"Say, mister, dy'e hear? I'll go yer five hundred dollars," repeated the tall capper.

"I shan't bet any more to night," was the reply of that gentleman, who now gathered up his money and appeared to be about to leave the table.

"Oh, give us a chance—you're winner of us!" said the tall capper, in a half-imploring manner.

"What I've won is mine, and I've a right to do as I please with it," replied the person thus appealed to, putting his money in his pocket and turning away from the table.

"Why, in course it's yourn, d—n it! Who don't know that! But give a feller a chance, won't yer? Don't git skeered 'cause yer've won a few dollars."

This was too much for the fashionably-dressed worthy. "Scared! scared!" he repeated. "That's a nice way to talk to a man because he's won yer money. There's twelve hundred dollars that says yer can't pick up the Jack!" he exclaimed, pulling from his pockets the gold and roll of bank-notes, and throwing them upon the table.

"I ain't got that much money," said the tall capper, "but I'll go yer five hundred. Come, what d'yer say?"

"No, sir, I'm too 'scared' to bet less than twelve hundred; so put up or shut up."

"How much money hev yer got?" inquired the tall capper, in an undertone, of his friend the drover. The latter again consulted his large leathern pocket-book, and drew forth from its recesses three hundred dollars more, which he handed to his friend.

"Here's eight hundred dollars; we'll go yer that, Mister," said the tall capper, flinging upon the table the five hundred dollars he held in his hand and the three hundred given him by his friend.

"Twelve hundred dollars goes, not a cent less!" was the inexorable reply.

"See ef yer ain't got some more money," whispered the tall capper to his dupe. Again the drover drew forth the voluminous pocket-book, and prospected its interior, amid the hushed voices of the ring of spectators, who were now wrought up to the highest pitch of excitement. He produced from thence two hundred dollars more, which he handed his tempter, saying, "That's wiped her out clean as a rifle."

"I'll go a hundred ef ennybuddy else 'll go t'other," cried the

diminutive capper, producing from his breeches pockets five twenties in gold, and laying them on the table.

"Well, it's worth a hundred to see this here bet come off," chimed in another capper, throwing on the table one hundred dollars in bank-bills.

"Now ye're ready, ain't yer, Mister?" asked the tall capper, addressing the gentleman who was taking the wagers.

"In a minute," replied that worthy, carefully counting and covering the several wagers, at the same time taking care to place the money within his easy reach, after which he sung out, with the greatest composure, "The game is made! Roll!"

"Pick it up," said the tall capper to the man of bogs.

With a hand shivering like an aspen-leaf, the drover placed his hand irresolutely upon the middle card. Light as it was, it seemed to be to him like a mountain of lead. He believed it to be the Jack, as much as he believed in the fact of his own existence—yea, knew it! Had he not distinctly seen its face as 'twas laid there, and no mortal hand had since touched it! Then why should he tremble so? Certainly not from any sense of guilt or conviction that he was committing a fraud! No, indeed! that was the last thing to trouble him. 'Twas an unexplainable dread of losing the money he had at stake. The painful stillness was at last broken! The card lay face upwards on the table. At its sight he changed from the semblance of a human being to that of a lifeless corpse. He stood perfectly stupid, and neither saw the few looks of pity directed towards him by some of the passengers, nor heard the derisive jeers and boisterous shouts of laughter with which the crowd greeted his discomfiture.

The manipulator hastily gathered up his cards and put them in his pocket. The game was closed. The boat shortly made a landing to take in wood, and when we were once more moving down the stream, the card-thrower and his cappers had disappeared from our midst.

This final trick which caught the hog-drover is the last ruse employed by the manipulator and his cappers, and is seldom resorted to, unless the boat on which they are operating is about to make a landing. The card-thrower had concealed in his coat pocket a five of spades. Just previous to giving his last toss to the cards, he palmed this five in his left hand, and holding it

there, moves the cards on the table with his right, lifting them up so that the dupe may plainly see their faces; and having done this, his left hand lightly touches the cards, as if arranging them in their places. While doing this, quick as thought, he has palmed up the Jack, or winning card, and deposited in its place the five of spades, or whatever card he has in his left hand. It's the old tale of "the biter bit," or diamond cut diamond.

The Log merchant, who was a fussy, forward, and contradictory fellow found on the steamer but few sympathizers, as in fact people who lose their cash at three-card monte seldom do. On the day before we reached New Orleans I drew him into conversation, with a desire of ascertaining his sentiments on the subject of three cards.

At first he did not seem to be very communicative on the subject; but when I persisted in forcing the fact on his notice that the guesser had the best of the game, it finally aroused his ire, and turning to me savagely, he demanded, in a sneering tone, "If them's your sentiments, why the h—l don't yer foller arter that game?"

"Because I'm not engaged in that kind of business at present," I mildly replied.

"Look a here, stranger," he ejaculated, "I'd like to ax yer a question."

"You can do so, with pleasure," I rejoined.

"S'pose, then, I had three state-rooms in that there cabin, an' I puts a nigger inter one and two white men inter t'other tew, without yer seein' me dew it, mind, would yer go yer money on 't yer could pick out the room where ther nigger was?"

"Well," I replied, drawling out my words and looking him straight in the eye, "if the day was hot, and my nose was in good order, and I had the privilege of smelling at the door of each state-room as long as you were peeping under that fellow's cards the other night, I don't think I could make a worse blunder in finding the room containing the nigger, than you did in finding that Jack of diamonds."

His face reddened up instantly. He evidently thought no one on board was aware of his little game. "You were watching me, then?" he said, with a forced laugh.

"Yes, indeed! and it didn't look exactly the clean thing in you

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"You were watching me,

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to take advantage of a party of gentlemen in that underhand  
 manner!"

"Gentlemen, h—! They're nothing but a pack o' thieves!"  
 he retorted, fiercely.

"But how came you to make such a mistake? Didn't you see  
 the Jack of diamonds when you stooped down?"

"Yes!" he answered, emphatically, "and the other two fives,  
 as plain as I see you now."

"I see! I see!" I said. "You got frightened and picked up the  
 wrong card. Well, I don't much wonder at it," I resumed; "it's  
 but natural for one to be thrown off his feet when he feels  
 he's doing a dishonest action."

The fury of hell was depicted upon his scowling countenance,  
 on which symptoms of danger to myself were plainly depicted;  
 but I continued in the same cold, calm tone, without noticing  
 the change in his features: "I should have turned up those two  
 other cards to find out whether the Jack of diamonds was among  
 them at all."

"Look here, stranger, what air ye drivin' at? Don't I tell  
 yer I seen all the keards? Yer don't think I'm such a fool I  
 can't see, do yer?"

"Don't fly into a passion, my dear sir; we're all liable to be  
 fooled sometimes. Now you picked up what you thought was  
 the Jack of diamonds, because you plainly saw the face of the  
 card when that fellow was so accommodating as to hold it up on  
 purpose that you should see it. You watched him lay the card  
 down on the table, and knew where it was laid exactly, and was  
 satisfied to bet on that information several hundred dollars. Is  
 that so?" He nodded assent. "Well, then," I continued, "you  
 picked up the card, and it was not the Jack of diamonds, eh?"

"What then?" he calmly asked.

"Oh, nothing! only if you'd turned over the other two cards  
 you'd have known whether the Jack of diamonds was among  
 them, on the table, or in the pocket of that fellow who was  
 throwing the cards, that's all!"

He gazed at me for a moment in speechless astonishment, as  
 if a sudden flash of light had revealed to his brain a hidden mys-  
 tery, and finally stammered out, "Stranger, I allers suspected  
 there was sumthin' dark about that there Jack o' diminds!  
 Them fellers robbed me, sure! Didn't they, now?"



"I don't know, perhaps so," I assented.

"Who was that there feller 't throwed them keards?"

"I don't know," I replied. "I never saw him before."

"D'ye think he was consarned with them other fellers, now?"

"They al' left the boat at the wood-pile," was my reply.

"They robbed me, sartain sure. I sees it all now! Let me clap my eye on one o' 'em again," he ejaculated, shaking his head and gritting his teeth.

"Why, what will you do to them?"

"I'll make 'em wish they'd never seed me, nor yet my money," he replied, with a terrible oath.

"You'd much better leave them alone," I replied. "Every one of them had revolvers or bow-knives buckled about their persons, and it is nothing but fun for them to put a hole in a man."

"I'll make 'em eat their pistols and bowie-knives ef I gets my claws on 'em," he exclaimed, casting on me a threatening look, with which threat he separated himself from me, and never again noticed me either by word or look, while on the steamer together.

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

### MOBILE.

A very short sojourn in New Orleans convinced me that it was no place of residence for a professional gambler, unless he were a native-born Creole, and lived in the first municipality, and even then it was requisite, in order to be able to run a gambling-room on the sly, that one should have sufficient political influence to protect him from police intrusion. Besides this danger, he was in constant peril from the swarm of informers prowling around in various disguises, ready to make five hundred dollars by causing the conviction of any gambler whom they could detect dealing a banking-game; the said amount being one moiety of the sum of which any person guilty of such an enormity was mulcted on his first offense. He who had the temerity to repeat the action was obliged to disburse five thousand dollars, and if he still hankered after "tigers" and kindred devices of the ad-

versary, he was accommodated with a domicile at the expense of the State, for a period of two years, which was supposed to be a sovereign cure for such hallucinations. Under this law, principals and their players were equally liable.

No person of sane mind, having the slightest respect for his money or his person, would dream of opening a banking-game of any kind in the American quarter of the city. Gamblers living in the place had two or three rooms in the vicinity of the St. Charles Hotel, where the votaries of chance met, to amuse themselves at the green tables with short games, such not being proscribed by law.

Snapo of faro were sometimes opened at these meetings; the members being assured that no "black sheep" were present. Even then the greatest precaution was exercised, and every person present was obliged to make a bet at the game, even should his stake be only a picayaune, in order that no member of the company might be dragged to court, and there compelled to assist in the conviction of his neighbor. Precautions of this kind were not always a safeguard, however; the five hundred dollar bribe was very tempting, and caused many to turn informer; while the police had constantly their spies upon the trail, who were no respecters of persons, nor of doors either, whenever they suspected a banking-game of any sort to be going forward. Many faro-dealing gamblers were, through the agency of spies, seized, with their players, by the officers of the law, and dragged before the courts, where they were compelled to pay over one thousand dollars each, before they could get released from "durance vile." Several persons, unable to raise this amount, were rusticated in the parish prison, where they were doomed to remain one year, to expiate their crimes, if they were unable "to raise the wind."

The glowing description which was given me, of the gambling facilities of Mobile, and the immense amount of money in circulation in that city, induced me to take a lake-boat and visit that place.

With the exception of New Orleans and Havana, there was no commercial mart on the Gulf of Mexico as thriving as Mobile, when I first visited the place, and I doubt if there could have been found on the face of the globe, a place with even five times its population, where crime, debauchery, and lawlessness of

every description, reigned rampant to such a fearful extent. The local population numbered about thirty thousand souls, of whom more than half were negroes. In addition to these it had, every winter, a transient population of about the same number, consisting of strangers, merchants from the interior of the country, foreign merchants, sailors 'longshoremen, and steam-boat-men, from Pittsburgh, Cincinnati and Louisville, who were engaged in bringing cotton and other produce from the interior of the State by the several navigable streams which empty into Mobile Bay, to the city.

In the winter season the place supported two theatres, one of which was under the direction of Smith & Ludlow, and the drama was there as well represented as in any of the theatres of our Atlantic cities. The godly were in force, too, in Mobile, if one might venture to judge from the numerous handsome churches which adorned the place. The harbor was a busy scene of commerce and action, crowded with vessels and ships of every possible description, while from their masts floated the flags of nearly every nation on earth. Lying at the wharves, either loading or unloading, crowded with cotton and other merchandise, were scores of river steamers, lake steamers, coasting vessels, and various sorts of smaller water-craft.

The stranger could see without difficulty, even on his first visit to the place, that the godless were there greatly in the ascendency. In nearly every single building along the street facing the river, and also in many of those in the streets leading down to the river, could be found a liquor-shop of one kind or another. In many of these places were played heavy percentage games, like chuck, rondo, craps, and similar institutions, plainly exposed to the public view. Located centrally in the city, and in its most business part, was a block of brick buildings, called the "Shakespeare's Row." It was built somewhat in the Spanish style, having on the inside a large court-yard, which was entered by two arched gateways from the opposite streets. This court-yard contained twenty-eight rooms. Those on the second and third stories were surrounded with an enclosed piazza, which ran around the four sides of the building, and which were reached from the court-yard by different stairways. Every one of these rooms was occupied for gambling purposes, the only banking-games played there being roulette and faro, and only

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persons of gentlemanly exterior being allowed there, and the unclean and disorderly excluded without remorse. The gambling was conducted by the better class of gamblers, with the utmost fairness, even a heavy percentage game not being tolerated in the rooms. The faro-banks dealt in the different rooms had different limits, but they usually ranged from twelve dollars and a half, and fifty, to that of one hundred with a paroli to eight hundred. The roulette-wheels were usually limited proportionably to the faro games—the largest given being twenty-five dollars on a bar or single figure, and seven hundred dollars on the colors, each person betting having the privilege of wagering the amount mentioned, at pleasure.

While those portions of the Shakesperian row which faced on either street were occupied by mercantile offices, banks, jewelry stores, tailoring establishments, money brokers, coffee-houses, billiard saloons, and restaurants, its court-yard was one vast gambling-hell, the resort, of evenings, of persons moving in the different upper walks of life; and from early candle-light till the break of day, the rattling of faro-checks and the spinning of roulette-wheels could be heard without cessation. Besides the many in the Shakespeare row, there were scattered about the city several other gambling-rooms, a few of them being of the more respectable class, but the greater number of the lowest possible order, located, as I said before, in low drinking-houses, where only heavy percentage games were played, and to which all classes, with the single exception of the negroes, were privileged to contribute their support. Still, beyond the heavy percentage attached to these games, "chuck" having about seventeen per cent. in its favor, those playing at them had a fair show for their money, as the arts of the sharper had not then begun to be practiced in the public gambling-houses of this country. I counted at one time, in the city of Mobile, forty-four faro games and thirty-seven roulette-wheels, most of which did a flourishing business, as did also the heavy percentage games. Brandon bank-notes, and those of other wild-cat banks, were plentiful there as hops in Kent, and most of them were at that time going at par.

In the suburbs of the city were several dance-houses of the lowest order, where lawlessness, indecency, and debauchery reigned supreme. Here thieves of both sexes assembled to prey upon

the unwary. Lewd women with their more degraded associates drove decency to cover with their abandoned talk and gestures. Boatmen, 'longshoremen, and sailors, spent among these abandoned harlots their hard earnings, and drank the poisonous fluids which maddened their brains, and made them, but too often, commit deeds of blood and violence. No police force dared intrude their unwelcome presence on the scenes carried on in those vile dens; and the peaceable and timid avoided their vicinity as they would have done that of a pest-house.

From dark to dawn, lawlessness stalked abroad rampant in Mobile. Gaugs of drunken boatmen, sailors, and reckless adventurers, staggered through the streets, making night hideous with obscene songs and loud oaths, hunting for the next dram-shop or a fight, both of which were conveniently on hand. The imbecile police were utterly powerless, and could not in the least prevent the full-deck fights which were constantly going forward, but were compelled to stand calmly by until the combatants had pummeled one another to their heart's satisfaction, before peace could be in any degree restored. Every person, nearly, secretly carried weapons upon their persons, which they used upon the smallest provocation, and sometimes with none at all; and even sailors, 'longshoremen, and boat-hands, whipped out their sheath-knives and slashed away at each other, whenever the force of anger or alcohol prevailed over reason. Nor did the lower class monopolize the vices and crimes afflicting the peace. Duels, street-fights, and cowardly assassinations, were ordinary pastimes among the rich and influential. The seduction of a wife, followed by the cold-blooded assassination of the seducer at the hands of the husband, or shooting a man immediately down for disputing the veracity of the slayer, were trivial matters which scarcely called for a passing notice, while forgeries and embezzlements were but venial offenses which were quickly whitewashed over. It was well for Mobile in those days that a divine Providence had ceased to destroy cities for the crimes and vices of its inhabitants, or it would certainly have shared the fate of ancient Sodom and Gomorrah.

Yet, strange as it may appear, Mobile was provided with those necessary safeguards of life and property, such as laws, temples of justice, prisons, magistrates, police, executive officers, and the like; but these time-honored institutions were considered as

merely appendages for the adornment of the city, by the free and the brave, who at that period carried all before them. Larceny was the only acknowledged crime, and when thieves were caught in the act of stealing, or the offense was clearly proven against them, the courts were spared the trouble of trying them, or the county the expense of keeping them, by the lynchers, who escorted them to the edge of the piney woods in the rear of the town, and then and there administered to them as many lashes as they considered a commensurate punishment for their offense. Over murderers of all descriptions the courts held sole jurisdiction; but none except negroes, or those who had shed blood for purposes of plunder, were ever punished, no matter how deep their guilt or how cowardly their deed of blood. But, to the honor and credit of Mobile courts be it said, they never permitted one class of criminals to escape the halter, whenever it was possible to fasten upon them their crimes, and these were negro thieves. Towards them the laws were as severe and unalterable as the code of Draco, and even the miscreant who had the hardihood to express sympathy for the strangled wretch was fortunate if he escaped a similar fate at the hands of the lynchers.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

## A "NIGGER IN THE FENCE."

The principal hotel in Mobile was the "Waverly," and on the same street, directly facing, was the best coffee-house, named after the palace of the great Frederic at Potsdam. On the first floor above the "Sans Souci" was a suite of gambling-rooms belonging to a firm of three gamblers named Kent, Myers, and Greene, respectively. This firm, during the winter, had fallen into bad luck, and had lost something like \$33,000, which induced one member to withdraw from it, having been bought out by his partners, Kent and Greene.

This establishment was composed of two large rooms, handsomely fitted up and furnished. In one of these apartments the banking-games, consisting of faro and a thirty-six numbered roulette-wheel, were conducted, while the other was used for

short-card games and as a general sitting-room. On the floor above were two others, used by Kent and Greene as sleeping-rooms. I had made these gambling-rooms my place of resort during the winter and spring, and had always been most cordially received by these gentlemen, and also by Mr. Myers, up to the time when he drew out from the concern.

Shortly after he left and sold out his interest to Kent and Greene, these latter offered me an interest in the bank. I was to take one-third interest in the game, bank my own interest, and attend to the conducting of the bank. The place had the best run of custom of any in the city. It was patronized principally by business men, and largely by the higher class of steamboat officials. But the season was rapidly drawing to a close, and I could hardly expect to have more than a five or six weeks' business before the scorching sun and the parched sands of Mobile would drive from the place every one privileged with locomotion whose business would in any manner permit them to seek more endurable localities.

My senior partner, Mr. Greene, was a strange specimen of the "*genus homo*." He had risen to the surface somewhere among the red lands of Georgia, and had groped his way along until he finally reached Mobile, some twenty-five years previous to our meeting, where, to use his own expression, he "started in givin' ther boys farrer, and had kept it up ever since." He was at that time (that is, when I first met him,) about sixty years of age, tall, powerfully built, and active. He possessed a generous disposition, and a credulous nature, which was frequently imposed upon, and was, besides, exceedingly ignorant and superstitious. The old fellow was very popular among the play-going portion of the community, and whenever his game fell off for want of patrons, all the rest in the city might hang up the fiddle. The old fellow had grown-up sons and daughters, and owned a small cotton plantation on the Tombigbee River, on which he worked about forty slaves. If, as he was so fond of boasting, he had been giving the boys of Mobile "farrer" for twenty-five years, he was certainly a terribly poor loser, but, on account of his losses, would never display any signs of ill-temper, his motto being, "Ef yer can't afford ter lose, yer oughtn't ter play."

During the winter, while his game was being badly beaten,

the belief became firmly rooted in his mind that his presence in the room was the cause of this bad luck, and in order to counteract this, he would always leave the room whenever any heavy play was going forward. On these occasions he could be found pacing backward and forward like a staked bear in front of the "Sans Souci," with bent body, and both hands firmly clasped behind him, industriously engaged in sprinkling the pavement copiously with tobacco juice, which he squirted out in all directions as fast as he could masticate the precious weed. Every now and then his eyes would be directed to the stairway leading to his room, and at the appearance of a familiar face he would accost the owner with, "How's ther cussed ole mill above grindin' now?" If the answer was unfavorable, he would drop his eyes on the pavement again and resume his pace, muttering to himself, "There's a Joner in that room, sure!" But should the new comer be the bearer of good news, he would invite him up to the bar of the "Sans Souci" to imbibe.

The old man consulted all the fortune-tellers who hung out their shingles in the place. And whatever instructions they gave him for his conduct, in order that his ill-fortune might be reversed, he followed to the letter. But those incantations which he had paid so liberally for having rehearsed, in order that this desirable consummation might be reached, had, up to the middle of the spring, the period when I tied my luck to his, signally failed to have the desired effect. The golden promises made to him by the diviners of a doubtful future had faded away one by one, like the "baseless fabric of a vision." One of his acquaintances, a practical joker, being well acquainted with the old man's peculiar weakness, put up a job to amuse himself and friends at the old fellow's expense. This jocular worthy, through the means of bribery, brought to his assistance an old crone who had lately anchored in the city, and hung out a shingle which informed the credulous public that she was prepared to give information relative to the past, present, and future, by the scientific means of the horoscope. The vulgar fortune-tellers to whom Mr. Greene had heretofore applied had only consulted cards, coffee-grounds, etc., and he was now convinced they had been telling him falsehoods the whole winter. His mind was now ready to receive a deeper course of instruction in these occult sciences, and when he learned of the advent in the



town of this sage female of the horoscope, who could predict future events by the position of the stars, he forthwith bled him to her abode. The old cheat kept him in suspense, and his supposed fate hanging in the balance, for three days, while she was consulting the stars and planets, and for each consultation extracted from him a ten-dollar wild-cat note. The accommodating heavenly bodies finally divulged to her the fate which in the dim future awaited the faro-bank of Kent, Myers & Greene, and the power of guiding its future destiny was placed unreservedly and entirely in the hands of the last-named gentleman.

Mr. Greene was directed by this lady to appear at the race-track for nine consecutive mornings. This auspicious spot was situated some three miles from the city, and after he had reached it, which it was vital he should do at precisely nine o'clock, he was to start and walk once around the track. He was assured by the "wise woman" that, after the faithful performance of these labors, if he never revealed the mysterious divination to any person living in the meantime, his bank would not only recover all its losses, but would win, besides, \$49,000. Every morning any person who would take the trouble to observe might have seen the old fellow in his buggy driving out to the race-track, and at precisely the appointed hour might also have seen him start on the appointed pilgrimage, which for eight successive mornings he did not fail duly to accomplish. The joke was of course too good to keep, and it soon spread abroad from the two or three persons in the secret at first, till crowds could be seen of a morning on the road in buggies, carriages, and on horse-back, moving towards the race-track "to see old Greene do his work," without that venerable gentleman suspecting that he was the cause of these fashionable gatherings. The night before the charm was appointed to be wound up, a party of reprobates got hold of the old gentleman and stuffed him so expansively with champagne that he was entirely unable to come to time next morning, to his immense disgust and mortification, the more so that his aged diviner informed him that now, having disobeyed the mandate of the stars, he was no longer under their protection. But the joke having now become public property, it was not long until the old man found out he had been hoaxed, and was so enraged at the thought of having made himself the laughing-stock of the crowd, that he seized his double-barreled gun and struck

out on the war-path. The "good joke" would probably have turned out a very serious affair, had not its perpetrator taken the precaution to stow himself away out of the reach of his wrathful foe, who for two days constantly paraded the city in search of him. Finally the Sheriff laid violent hands on the old gentleman, and forced him to give security for his future observance of the peace and dignity of the State in bonds of \$5,000.

My other partner in this establishment was Mr. George Kent, a negro-trader, and, like most of his tribe, ignorant, cruel, uncouth, and overbearing. He was in person tall and raw-boned, with a sallow complexion and black hair and whiskers. He dressed well, but plainly, and wore jewels of any description. He was born and raised in Alabama, and started in life upon no other capital than his own merits. According to the statement of Mr. Greene he was at one time worth about \$60,000, which he had accumulated at negro-trading. While in possession of his money he became addicted to gaming. For many years he was an object for the machinations of the Harper tribe, who had dogged his footsteps from one slave-mart to another, until finally they had plucked him as clean as a broiled snipe. But, unlike thousands who had been victimized in the same manner, Kent learned to play all games well and also to protect himself from the arts of the sharper, towards whom he entertained the bitterest feelings, to which he frequently gave vent by declaring, "I'll kill enny thief, there and then, that I ketches a cheatin' me at keards." Whether upon occasion Mr. Kent would have carried out this blood-thirsty threat, I am quite unable to say; but as far as I ever ascertained, with all his numerous vices, he had not up to that period of his existence killed anybody. Mr. Kent was a fair general card-player; the game which he played most successfully being brag, at which he was at all hours quite ready and willing to amuse all comers; and when I came to the city but very few gamblers in Mobile cared to attack him at his favorite game. Though burdened with a mean disposition and an irritable temper, he lost his money at play without a whimper. He had not, during the last three years, dabbled in the slave-trade, but had devoted his energies solely to gambling, and during that period had been the constant partner of Mr. Greene.

The servant who waited on our room was the property of Kent. He was a bright mulatto, about twenty-two years of age,

and exceedingly intelligent. According to his own account of himself he was the son of his former master, at one time a well-to-do lawyer, practicing in Versailles, Kentucky. Whiskey got the best of him, however, and ruined him pecuniarily, and then finished its work by killing him. His creditors, after his death, seized his estate, and among the others of its belongings sold under the hammer were William Jones and his mother, the former becoming the property of Kent, who was at the time buying up negroes in Kentucky for the Mobile market, while the mother was bought by the keeper of a tavern at Paris, Kentucky.

William was attentive and respectful to every one with whom he was thrown in contact. To me he had, long before I thought of becoming a member of the firm, shown more than usual attention, which naturally caused me to take a deep interest in him, which was greatly strengthened when I learned his unfortunate position. Fortune, in throwing him into the hands of Kent, had dealt him a cruel blow. He was a most inhuman master, who never spoke a kind word to his slave, or allowed him a moment's pastime; and whenever policy or fear forbade him to vent his passion upon others, William was the scape-goat who received the brunt of his anger. Frequently for the slightest, and often an imaginary offense, he would take the boy to his sleeping apartment and flog him severely. Many of the patrons of the place noticed his cruelty toward the boy, and the comments passed upon his actions were by no means laudatory of Mr. Kent. But public opinion exercised no influence over his unfeeling heart, and it was only when old man Greene would remonstrate with him about his barbarous treatment of the boy, that William enjoyed a brief respite from his persecutions.

When I first became a visitor at the rooms, Kent, seeing I was disposed to play at his favorite short games with him, paid me the most assiduous attention. I soon discovered, however, that I was overmatched at these contests, and dropped them, consequently; but not before I had lost to him, at brag and similar games, about six hundred dollars. While these contests lasted he would exclaim, "I've broken ye in, an' ye're my meat now!" But he had made a false calculation; for no sooner had my thick skull received the fact that he overmatched me, than his coarse jests and rude bantering could not induce me to pit myself against him at any of the short-card games in which he was pro-

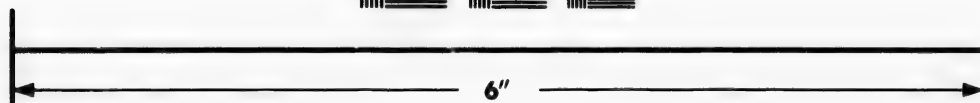
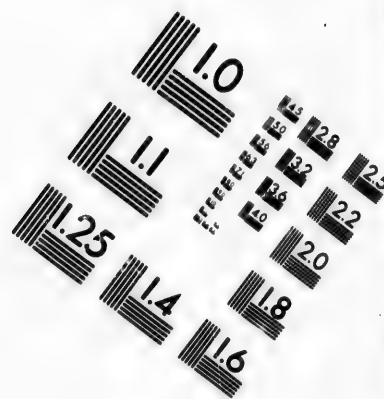
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silent. The fact of the business was, I had gotten to hate the fellow so thoroughly that I had rather at any time a thief should steal a hundred dollars from me than he should win one. He did not, however, show any rudeness towards me in consequence of my refusal to play with him longer; on the contrary, subsequently, whenever I came into the room he treated me as cordially as his dirty nature would permit him to do; but when I became a partner of the concern he fancied that my age would render me a fitting object for him to display his domineering disposition upon. Old Greene had warned me that he was, as he expressed it, "a hard man to do business with," and informed me that "Kent is cantankerous at times, but ye mustn't mind 'im."

But I did mind "im," and at the very outset took the opportunity to give Mr. Kent distinctly to understand that I desired and was not disposed to put up with any of his nonsense, and from that time a remarkable coolness sprung up between us, although we worked at the faro-game both night and day together.

I had been at various times in the habit of giving to William small sums of money for little extra services which he rendered me personally. Shortly after the springing up of the coldness I have mentioned between myself and Kent, while in one of his chronic fits of ill-humor, he took the boy to his room and gave him a flogging. While stripping himself, according to the order of his master, to receive the punishment, a five-dollar gold piece dropped from his clothing, and William was compelled to acknowledge that he had received it from me as a gift. The fellow came to me in a furious rage, handed me the money, at the same time warning me that if I gave money to his boy there would "be some h'ar-pullin' goin' on about the house." Well knowing any altercation which I might have with him would only rebound on William, and subject him to farther and more brutal punishment, I answered him mildly, saying I had but paid the boy what I owed him for waiting upon me.

"I don't keep 'im here to wait on yer, by a damn sight. I keeps him here to wait on me an' this here room, an' I don't want yer to give 'im any more money, mind that, Mr. Morris."

"Very good, Mr. Kent," I replied; "I shan't offend you again in this respect."



On my entrance into the concern as one of its partners, its luck seemed to take a decided turn in our favor, which greatly relieved the overcharged heart and brain of Mr. Greene, and caused him to be more attentive to his business, and to abandon his former style of pacing up and down on the pavement in front of the Sans Souci Coffee-House.

Though, as the close of the business season approached, our play became perceptibly lighter, yet, on the whole, we had more patrons than any other establishment of the same sort in the city. Among our patrons was a young man from Boston, by name Joseph Forrest. He was handsome, dressed fashionably and with more than usual taste and care. He was well educated and possessed a large fund of general information, which he was vain of displaying in company, for doing which he never allowed an opportunity to slip. I had made the acquaintance of this gentleman shortly after my arrival in Mobile, and in the course of time I had formed a great liking for him—so much so that I had upon several occasions loaned him sums of money varying from one hundred dollars to five hundred dollars, when I saw no sort of prospect of his paying me, unless he should win it at faro or make it at the various short-card games he was fond of playing. He was a good general card-player, which, in gambling parlance, means he could play all the various short-card games well. But Mr. Forrest had a strong predilection for "fighting the tiger," and what money he had won at short-card games during the season, which was considerable, was cast into the maw of that voracious quadruped. I believe during his sojourn in Mobile I was the only one to whom he applied for money in his distress, it being his policy to make every one believe he was a person of means. When he borrowed from me, it was done in private, with the greatest secrecy, and when able he repaid me with the most scrupulous exactness. While I was interested in the house he lost twelve hundred dollars to the bank, and in the meantime about eight hundred dollars more, playing brag with Mr. Kent.

The hot weather had struck in upon us, mercantile establishments were closed, steamers were laying up, commerce, which had thrilled the city in every artery with busy life, was in its last throes. Familiar faces that had lately thronged our streets and public places had disappeared; "fly time" had arrived, and

scarcely a person was to be seen of an evening in our rooms, which were lately crowded with a motley gathering. I was one morning sitting in my sleeping-room, thinking about settling up my business with Greene & Kent and leaving Mobile for the North, when Kent's boy William rapped at the door. I opened the door and told him to come in, but he had no sooner complied with my request, than I began to think it strange that he had ventured in. Since the late unpleasantness between his master and myself about the five-dollar piece, he had not, as formerly, come to my room to serve me, nor dare he, while at the gambling-room, show me the same attention as the veriest stranger might claim from him while his master was present. My first impression was that my presence was required in the gambling-room by his master or Mr. Greene, and that he was sent to notify me of the fact, but I quickly abandoned this theory of his appearance on observing his pale and haggard countenance and confused manner. After paying me the ordinary compliments of the morning, he began to stammer, finally broke down altogether, and seemed unable to utter a word. Without seeming to notice his manner, I gave him ample time to recover himself while I walked over to the mirror and commenced arranging my hair.

"Is you goin' ter stay here long of massa John?" he finally asked, before I had completed that part of my toilet.

"In Mobile, do you mean, William?"

"Yes, sah."

"No, William; I shall probably go to New Orleans to-morrow or next day."

"Couldn't ye take me wid yer, marster John? I'se 'd make yer a good servant."

"I don't doubt it! But your master won't sell you, William."

"No, sah! Dat he won't so long's he's got all dat money."

"Then I'm afraid I can't do anything for you. But why does he treat you so cruelly?"

"He couldn't help it, marster John; he treats eberybody bad, kase he bad hisself."

"I'm very sorry for you, William, and wish you had a kinder master; I'll give Mr. Kent one thousand dollars for you, and you can tell him so if you wish."

"Marster Smith, de t'eatre man, he offer him dat fur me dis las' winter, but he no takes it, an' I 'se seen better boys dan I is

sell here fur six or seven hundred dollars. He jist keeps me fur to spite me, dat's all he dus it fur."

"Well, I'm sorry for you, my boy."

"I knows how yer could git me, marster John," he said, drawing nearer to me, and lowering his voice, while at the same time his restless round eyes peered directly into mine.

"Speak out! don't be afraid! You know you can trust me."

"I knows dat ar or I shouldn't be 'ere."

"Well, go on then!"

"Yer kin broke 'im at brag an' win me too. I'll make yer do it, marster John."

"How can you manage that, William?"

"I'll gib yer his hand by de item. I'll do it ef yer say so, marster John!"

This proposition rather staggered me, for it was the very last thing I was expecting from the source from whence it emanated. I did not give the boy credit for understanding that ingenious art, whereby the unsuspecting may be relieved of their money at the card-table. This offer revealed a whole history of unavenged wrongs, and was, besides, in a selfish point of view, a very tempting one to me; as of my own knowledge I knew Kent had in his possession about ten thousand dollars; but a moment's reflection convinced me that I was by no means the proper person to accomplish such a feat.

"No, William!" I replied in a calm voice; "I cannot do it! In the first place he is my partner, and I must not break faith with him; but, even outside of that, I am the very worst person you could have selected for such an undertaking. I have repeatedly refused to play him brag, and should I now banter him for the game and win, it would certainly arouse his suspicious nature, knowing, as he does, your friendly feeling for me, and would end by getting us both into serious trouble. No, William! that won't do! But I want to see you out of his clutches, and am willing to aid you, provided I can do so without being compromised in the matter. I am not his guardian, and am therefore bound by no law to protect his interests further than where he is concerned with me in the faro-bank. You go and see Mr. Forrest; he's the very man you want. Go right off and see him! He'll be very glad of the chance which I cannot accept."

"I dusn't knows 'im likes I duz you, marster John," said the

colored boy, regarding me doubtfully; "an' maybe he'll go right away an' tell Mister Kent!"

"He'll do nothing of the sort," I rejoined, with some asperity; "he wants money too bad for that."

"Hadrn't you better see 'im first, marster John?"

"No, William; because I don't wish to be known in the matter at all by any one save yourself, and you mustn't give Mr. Forrest reason to suspect, either by word or action, that I know anything about your business. Go and see him, and talk to him just as you've talked to me, and I'll warrant, if you both manage right, that you'll obtain your freedom, and break your master into the bargain."

He hesitated. He feared the ordeal of placing himself in the hands, and therefore in the power, of a second person. When I proposed Forrest, I was almost assured he would grasp at so favorable an opportunity for making money with great eagerness, but a moment's reflection, after the first glare of the project had subsided, convinced me that there were contingent circumstances belonging to the matter, requiring, at least, some consideration. In the first place, like all northern men coming to the south, he might have a dread of entering into collusion with a slave, and possibly might betray him to his master. In the second place, supposing William and himself succeeded in accomplishing his desire, what security had the poor slave that he would deal fairly by him? Might he not win Kent's money and the boy, reach New Orleans with both, and there sell him into slavery again, and keep all the plunder? What should prevent him from perpetrating such an act of treachery? The boy's tongue was tied by dread of the lash, and even should he have the temerity to speak in his own defense, his voice would avail nothing in a court of justice against that of a white man. But there was nothing better for it, and I had to rely upon Forrest's honor in the case—a foundation, when you do not thoroughly know your man, as uncertain and treacherous as the quicksands of the apparently hard and smooth sea-shore; for though but young in years, I had thoroughly learned how closely allied are honor and interest. After a few moments' cogitation, however, I thought I saw my way clear, and advised William to go at once to the room of Forrest and see him. I told him I would follow, and wait in the street for him, and as he came from the house, if Mr.

Forrest declined, or in any way demurred at accepting the proposition, he was to nod and lift his hat to me at the same time; but if everything proved to be satisfactory he was not to notice me in any way whatever, but go directly to my room, whither I would immediately follow, to hear the particulars of the interview. I had resolved in case Forrest refused to take up the affair, that I would go directly to his room and try my utmost powers of persuasion to induce him to keep the boy's secret at least; but this measure was purely precautionary, as I believed Forrest would accept William's proposition with the greatest avidity. Then I also mentioned to William the opportunity which Forrest would have of acting treacherously by him, in case their enterprise succeeded; and to obviate as much as possible the chances against him, I advised him to have an explicit understanding with that gentleman. "Tell him," I said, "that your freedom must be the first thing taken into consideration, if sufficient money is won to buy it. Tell him that all moneys won more than sufficient to purchase that, must be equally divided between you, and if the game is prolonged to different sittings, that he must meet and settle with you after every sitting. And in case he should play for you, he must have a bill of sale of you made out and signed by Kent, and that he must be bound to sell you again to any person you should wish to have buy you. The intelligent boy understood my meaning and motives thoroughly, and promised to follow my directions implicitly. I then gave him four hundred dollars and told him that if he was successful in coming to an agreement with Forrest, to give it to him to play the game against Kent; but in case they could not come to an arrangement, not to give him the money, and in any case not to do so unless he was willing to accede to all the stipulations mentioned, but to leave him and come out into the street, and give me the sign we had agreed upon to denote a failure. I knew well enough that Forrest was not likely to have more than one or two hundred dollars, and that the additional four hundred would give him a pretty good stake to meet Kent with the powerful leverage which he would have also in his favor. I instructed William to tell him that the money was his own, which he had saved up without the knowledge of Kent, and after these last instructions sent him on his errand.

As the time of William's absence lengthened, I was satisfied

that I had not been mistaken in the matter, and that Forrest had snapped eagerly at the prospect of getting the best of his old adversary at brag, and my premonitions were at length confirmed by the appearance of William in the street, where he immediately gave the preconcerted signal that all was well understood. In a few moments we were again closeted in my room, where he informed me that Forrest had accepted his proposition without a single moment's hesitation, and had solemnly promised to observe all his stipulations to the very letter.

At about five o'clock in the evening, Kent, William and myself being the sole occupants of the gambling-room, Forrest entered with a smiling face, and after saluting us each according to his custom, he walked up to the round card-table at which Kent was sitting, and throwing down upon it, before him, a pile of bank-bills, said: "There, Mr. Kent, is something for you to take in at brag."

"You don't tell me that, Forrest!" exclaimed Kent, his eyes brightening as much at the prospect of gain as of a contest at his favorite pastime. "Why, I did not think thar was that much money left in town!" and added, "Here, William, gin us some keards," in the tone of a man in more than usual good-humor. The paper was immediately furnished, and they took their place and the contest commenced, each trying to outwit the other. Not expecting any faro-game, and thinking my presence in the room might incommode Forrest, I took my hat and strolled out, and did not return again until after nine o'clock.

As I re-entered the room, a single glance at the card-table convinced me that Forrest was progressing finely. Kent had scarcely any money before him on the table, and was sweating profusely, and was as uneasy as a bull in fly-time.

"Give me two thousand dollars, Morris! This here Yank's chawin' me up," was the first salute I received on my entrance.

"You must have had some bad luck," I replied, by way of consolation; but he interrupted me savagely with:

"I don't know what you calls it, but ef he kin beat me at this here game, he kin win enough o' stuff ter buy hisself a stone house ter keep hisself from freezing ter death in, in that there damned cold abolition country o' hisson." While he was engaged in the delivery of this neat speech, I was counting out from the bank-money the sum he had demanded. "How much stuff

o' mine ye got thar?" he inquired, seeing me occupied in running over the bank-notes in the roll.

"Do you wish me to settle up the game, sir?"

"I reckon as how you might jist as well." "Tis here d—n bank ain't goin' ter git enny more play," he replied.

I settled up the bank-book in a few moments, and handed it over to him for inspection.

"Five thousand eight hundred an' thirteen bucks ye've got there o' mine, then, hey?"

"Yes, sir, that I believe is the amount," I rejoined.

"Wall, pitch it heah; I reckon as how this feller here 'll git all afore mornin'."

I did as he bade me, and immediately afterwards left the rooms. Forrest was then already some three thousand dollars winner of him, and as I thought it would likely take him till close on to daylight before he would have cleaned him out entirely, I therefore resolved to remain up, in order to be "in at the death." Having loitered away among some of the other gambling-houses of the place some five hours, my impatience to know how the affair was going would not permit me to absent myself from the scene of action, and the struggle in which I felt myself almost vitally interested. On my return I found Kent and Forrest still facing each other at the card-table, and directly behind his master's chair was seated William. A gleam of triumph shot from his eyes as they encountered mine, and then they fell significantly upon the table. Lying near the left hand of Forrest was a large pile of bank-notes, and in the center of the table laid another pile. Of the five thousand eight hundred and thirteen dollars which I had given Kent at the beginning of the evening, not a cent remained near him; and a single glance convinced me at the moment of my entrance into the room, that his last dollar was up in the pool, when the silence was broken by a wrangle concerning the issue of the game. Each held his brag hand before him upon the table. Kent had been drinking brandy pretty freely during my absence, and its effects were now plainly visible upon him.

The dispute, if such it could be called, originated in this manner: Forrest had dealt the cards and had placed an ante of twenty-five dollars on the center of the table, which was immediately covered by Kent, when Forrest bet him one hundred

dollars more. This was also seen by Kent, after which he shoved up into the pool what money he had before him, being his last dollar, and amounting to four hundred and seventy-five dollars. Forrest covered the last brag of his adversary, which made altogether in the pool twelve hundred dollars. Both contestants stood "pat"—that is, refused to draw fresh cards. Kent, having the "age," or first play, said, "I'll bet five hundred dollars." "Put it up," replied his adversary. But Mr. Kent did not happen to have the little sum handy about him, but insisted that his word was good for the amount. The incredulous Forrest could not see it in that light. It was while this little "on-plesantness" was on the "tapis" that I entered the room, and as I approached the table the silence was broken by the voice of Kent, reiterating for the third or fourth time, "I'll bet you five hundred dollars for the 'pot'."

"The money ain't there, Mr. Kent, and I'm not going to take a credit bet," replied the calm voice of Forrest.

Kent, now throwing up his eyes to me for the first time, said, "Put up five hundred dollars thar, fur me, Morris."

"You must excuse me, sir," I replied.

"Yer've got Greene's money, hain't yer?" he inquired.

"Yes, sir."

"Give it to me, then," he demanded.

"Not until he orders me to do so, Mr. Kent," I rejoined.

"I tell yer it's all right, Morris."

"Give me ther money," he demanded, slapping his hand down violently upon the table.

"It's not right with me, Mr. Kent, until I have Mr. Greene's orders for it," I replied.

"Oh, let's show down for the 'pot,'" cried Forrest, excitedly.

"Not ef I knows myself, I dusn't," said Kent, stretching his right hand over the pool as if to protect it from a "snatch," though no demonstration of the kind had been made by his adversary.

"Well, then, put up your money, Mr. Kent," reiterated Forrest.

"It'll be all thar; don't yer fret yerself, Mr. Forrest." Then looking up to me he said, "Morris, put up that five hundred fur me. I've got ten thousand dollars deposited in ther bank o' Mobile, an' ef I lose the money I'll pay yer ter-morrer, sure. Put it up,



Morris; it's all right. George Kent never went back on 'is word yit. Bet yer life on 't!"

"You must excuse me, Mr. Kent," I replied, "I cannot accommodate you!"

Finding he could neither get Forrest to play with him on space nor yet coax any money out of me, he thought of his slave-boy, perhaps for the first time, and cried out, "Come here, William."

The boy rose from his chair behind his master, and stood beside him. "Here's my boy, Mr. Forrest; I'll bet 'im at five hundred dollars," he said, addressing his adversary.

"I'm not taking bets that way, Mr. Kent," replied the imperturbable Forrest.

"How in h—l are ye takin' 'em, then?" demanded his opponent, savagely.

"I want you to put up the money, or else let's show down hands and the best one take the pool."

"I shan't do 't! This here boy 's money, an' I'll bet 'im fur five hundred dollars. What do yer do now? Come, now, no d——n nonsense with me!" he cried, elevating his voice, and beginning to look "fitish."

"How much do you want for the boy, Mr. Kent?" inquired his adversary, in a very calm voice, not manifesting in any way that he was in the slightest degree moved by the bluster of his opponent.

"The boy ain't for sale, but I'll play 'im, redeemable in the mornin', at three thousand dollars, Mr. Forrest."

"I ain't playing my money against niggers at three thousand dollars apiece," cried that gentleman, angrily gathering up his money and stuffing it into the pockets of his pants. "Now, Mr. Kent," he added, in a determined voice, "let's show down for this 'pot,' and quit for the night." This movement of Forrest, which was executed for the purpose of inducing Kent to give a bill of sale of the negro, did not fail of its intended effect upon that worthy; to use a gambling phrase, "he was badly stuck," and would have sold himself for money to continue the game; besides, he felt confident that his cards were the best, as he held two braggers and an ace, and had the "age" in his favor besides. There were but two hands left in the pack better than the one he held, three natural aces, or a bragger with two aces. The

finease of his companion, in insisting that he should show down for the pool, confirmed him in the idea that he held the winning hand, and he was by no means willing to give Forrest a sight for the pool, when he had a chance of winning five hundred dollars more, or, if not called, the pool without exposing his carus.

Without appearing to take any notice of the words or actions of Forrest, he again turned to me and said, "Morris, just lend me fifteen hundred dollars on this 'ere boy, an I'll redeem 'im in ther mornin'."

"I wouldn't give you seven hundred dollars for him, Mr. Kent," I replied.

"Lend me five hundred dollars, then," he persisted.

"I'm going North in a few days," I rejoined, "and I don't want to be encumbered with any slave property."

"But I tells yer I'm gwine ter redeem the boy ter-morrer."

"Don't ask me any more, Mr. Kent, I beg, for I cannot oblige you," I said, decidedly.

He then turned once more to his opponent and asked him if he would play for the boy at fifteen hundred dollars, redeemable in the morning.

That gentleman appeared to study intently over the matter for some moments, and then said, "If you promise to redeem the boy to-morrow I'll play for him at fifteen hundred dollars; but you must give me a bill of sale of him now."

"William, bring me sumthin' ter write with," he cried, without making any direct reply to Forrest. In a few moments the boy had laid the desired articles before him. The writing out of a bill of sale for a slave was the best part of Mr. Kent's education; but the brandy which he had so freely imbibed had confused his brain, and it was some moments before he could collect his scattered faculties and bend them to the task before him. But he finally mastered it in a clerk-like manner, and handed over to Forrest, for inspection, the instrument which conveyed to him the body, bones, flesh and blood of the boy William, for and in consideration of the sum of fifteen hundred dollars. When Mr. Forrest had carefully examined the paper he took from his pocket all the money he had and laid it on the table. He then counted out from it the stipulated fifteen hundred dollars, and pushed it towards his adversary, with the remark, "I shall keep the boy in my possession till he's redeemed; and I have your word for it you'll do it to-morrow, Mr. Kent."

"Bet yer life on 't!" was the reply of that worthy, seizing the roll of bank-notes, and, without more ado, throwing it on the middle of the table, saying at the same moment, "Five hundred dollars!"

"You bet that much for the pool?" demanded Forrest.

"Thar's ther money, an' I've said it!" was the answer.

Forrest, without making any reply, counted from his money fifteen hundred dollars more and threw it into the pool, saying, "I see your five hundred dollars, and go you a thousand better."

The rebound was the last thing Kent had expected. He sat back in his chair and gazed with amazement into the face of his opponent for several moments. Meanwhile that gentleman kept his eyes on the pool, to all appearances as cool as a cucumber in an ice-box. The surprise of his opponent was only momentary, however. "My money's thar!" he replied, curtly.

"You call me, then?" demanded Forrest, laconically.

"Yes," was the reply. "I thought so!" he muttered, gazing on the two aces and a nine which Forrest had exposed upon the table; then throwing his own cards beside those of his opponent he said, quietly, "You've beat me, Forrest!"

The latter, without vouchsafing any remarks, took down the pool and conveyed the money, together with the bill of sale, to his pockets. Kent now commenced begging Forrest to continue their game until daybreak. "I've ten thousand dollars in the bank, Mr. Forrest, an' ef yer kin beat me, yer kin win it all. I'll go with yer soon's ther bank's open an' git ther money fur yer. I will, sure. Play ahead, d--n it. You'll git yer money ef yer win! Won't do it, hey? Got enuff, I s'pose! allers thought yer was short stock!" His entreaties, promises, and insults fell alike on steeled ears. As soon as he had safely disposed of his money, he rose from his chair and bade William follow him.

"Must I do it, Master George?" inquired William.

"Yes, yer hissen till ter-morrer; go along wid him," replied Kent, folding his arms upon the table and letting his head sink upon them.

The combined influence of the brandy which he had drank and the excitement through which he had passed had completely overcome him, and in a few moments he was fast asleep and snoring vigorously, in which state I left him and repaired to my lodgings.

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

## THE "NIGGER" GETS OUT.

It seemed to me that I had only just fallen asleep when I was awakened by a rapping at my door. I arose and opened it, and found that William was there and desired to speak with me. I looked at my watch, and found it was nine o'clock. William had to say to me that, having reached the lodgings of Mr. Forrest on the previous evening, he had demanded of that gentleman a division of the money he had won from Kent, but that Forrest had refused, on the ground that there might yet be some trouble with his old master about his ownership, and that it would be exceedingly dangerous for him to be found with money upon his person. "I told him," said William, "that that excuse would not answer, and requested him to comply at once with the terms of the compact," but he positively refused to do anything until the matter of William's ownership was definitely arranged with Kent. William then asked him for the four hundred dollars which he had put into his hands, and that was also refused, on the plea that he could do nothing until he came to an understanding with Kent regarding himself. "I tells yer, marster John," said William, at the end of this narrative, "dat man he means no good wid dis niggah!" I bade him at once return to Forrest, and if he saw him making any preparations for leaving the place, to come at once and inform me, telling him he would find me either at my lodgings or at the gambling-room, and charged him to say nothing whatever on the subject of his interview with me, or of the money, to Forrest, but to leave matters entirely in my hands.

I was satisfied that even if it was his intention to act foully by the boy, he would not leave the place except he took him along; but I was determined I would not leave it to chance. He had forfeited his word to the boy already, and had even refused to return the four hundred dollars which he had advanced him for purposes of play. This, certainly, did not look much as if he meant to act fairly in the matter. He might have thought, it is true, that Kent would be disposed to wrangle about his slave on the pretext that the bill of sale was given at a gambling-table,

and he might also have feared that, if the money were found upon William, he might be compelled under the lash to tell how he came by it. These reasons might have hindered him from fulfilling his contract, and he might still be willing to fulfill it so soon as everything relating to the ownership of William could be amicably arranged with Mr. Kent. But my suspicions that he intended to behave dishonorably in the matter had been aroused, and I was perfectly determined that, in the face of all hazard, I would prevent his leaving the city until he had made a just division of the money with William, and consigned the boy to my possession. He had in his hand about five thousand dollars rightfully belonging to the boy, except the four hundred dollars belonging to me, and also a bill of sale of the boy, whom he could convert into ready money in New Orleans, Louisville, or any of the large places he would pass through after leaving Mobile on his way northward. The prize was a tempting one to an unscrupulous person, especially when the only person in the world capable of unmasking his villainy was a poor tonguetied slave. I therefore resolved to stick closer than a brother to Mr. Forrest until matters were settled according to my taste.

At about one o'clock in the day I met the gentleman at the "Sans Souci." He appeared somewhat nervous when I congratulated him upon his good fortune, but replied to me by a short laugh and a knowing toss of the head, "Oh! I knew I was bound to beat that fellow certain if ever the cards broke even."

"But how in the world came you to give him fifteen hundred dollars for that boy?—he isn't worth seven hundred."

"I know that, but I was afraid of having a fuss with him, and thought that the best way to get out of it; besides, I knew to almost a certainty that I could beat his hand. But do you think he'll redeem the boy?" he asked, with an anxious look.

"I don't think he can," I replied; "but in case he does not, what do you intend to do with him?"

"Take him with me," he said.

"Where?" I asked.

"To New Orleans."

"Are you going to remain there?"

"No!" he replied; "I am going to the North almost immediately."

"Well," I rejoined, "don't leave until you come to some ar-

arrangement with Kent relative to the nigger; for he might be mean enough to make trouble for you otherwise."

"What trouble could he make me?" he inquired, rather anxiously.

"Why, the sale was made at a gambling-table, and he might be mean enough to dispute it on those grounds," I replied.

"Do you think that he would be mean enough to do such a thing?" he asked.

"I can't tell. There's no saying what he might do. It's your policy to come to some agreeable understanding with him; and, if you can do no better, to give him one or two hundred dollars over, in case he hands over to you the original bill of sale, which he holds, of William."

"That's pretty good! The d—n nigger's already cost me twice what he's worth," he grumbled.

"That's your own fault. You say you were obliged to take him to keep from having a fuss with Kent. Now, make the most you can of a bad bargain," I rejoined. "At this time of the year the boy at best will not bring over seven or eight hundred dollars, and when you get to New Orleans you go to Durant & Collyer's—they'll give you pretty near his value for him; then you won't have any more trouble with the nigger."

The firm mentioned was a myth, and had no existence except in my brain; but I watched him carefully as I spoke, and I saw my information had not fallen upon inattentive ears, and was by no means lost upon him.

"Who's Durant & Collyer?" he asked.

"They are the largest slave-merchants in New Orleans, if not in the whole South. They are constantly buying and selling slaves, from one year's end to another," I replied. "It would be a curiosity for you to see their slave-yard in that city."

"Do you know in what part of the city their place is?" he asked.

"Yes; 110 Esplanade Street," I replied, improvising street and number for his especial benefit. He took from his pocket a memorandum and made a note of it there and then, after which he returned it to his pocket, and then turning again to me, asked, "Have you seen anything of Kent to-day?"

"No," I answered; "but you'll find him in the gambling-room this evening, and I'd lose no time in seeing him there and settling

up your business with him." He said he would, and then left me.

Entering the gambling-room, the only person I met there was Mr. Greene, who was engaged in stepping the room off, backwards and forwards, at a rapid pace, with his hands clasped behind him. I learned from him that he got there about nine o'clock and found the lights all burning and the doors wide open, and Kent seated in a chair with his head leaning over on the poker-table, fast asleep. That gentleman, having been aroused from his slumbers, informed him of all that had taken place on the previous evening, after which he went up-stairs with the avowed intention of seeking his bed, where he was at that moment supposed to be sleeping. As soon as I had paid my respects to the worthy Greene, that gentleman stopped abruptly in his promenade directly in front of me, and addressed me with, "A pretty kittle o' fish he's cooked fur hisself!" at the same time rolling his eyes and jerking his thumbs in the direction of the ceiling, to indicate that he was speaking of his partner asleep in the room above. "Lose ten thousand dollars in a night and a likely nigger inter ther bargain! Jehu! Did you ever hear ther like o' 't? when everything's dead 's h—l, too! He'll be arter me fur a stake! Won't git it, tho'! I'm d—d ef he dus! I've got enough weight ter pack all summer, without toatin' 'im. I bet that Yank robbed 'im. They're allers sneakin' 'round ter git hold o' jist sich infernal fools as he is."

"Why, Mr. Kent said repeatedly last night that he had ten thousand dollars deposited in the bank of Mobile."

"Ten thousand lice! He ain't got a cent, d—n 'im."

"He told Forrest so, and wanted him to play for it, saying that if he won he'd take him to the bank directly it opened and give him his money."

"He's an infernal fool when he's got any lickin' in 'im, an' 'll allers over-play himself ef he loses; when he's all right there ain't an honest man in Allerbamer than George Kent."

"He wanted me to give him your money, too, but I wouldn't do it; and I don't think we shall get any more play here, so hadn't we better settle up our business? for I don't care to be carrying your money any longer."

The old gentleman acquiesced, and in a few moments we had settled up our affairs to the perfect satisfaction of both, and I

left my venerable friend for a few hours. When I returned to the room I found it occupied by Greene and Kent both, and the hands of the clock pointed to six. The latter gentleman seemed as fresh as a lark, and was much better dressed than I had ever seen him previously. As soon as I entered the room he accosted me with, "Well, Morris, how did I quit that fellow this morning?"

"I believe you lost what money you had, and William at fifteen hundred dollars," I said.

"How much money did you give me, now?" he inquired.

"Five thousand, eight hundred and thirteen dollars," I replied, "which was your share of the bank-money, and I have a few hours since given to Mr. Greene the same amount.

"That's all right," he rejoined. "I only want ter know what that d—n Yank robbed me outen. I was too drunk last night, and that sneakin' swindler robbed me sure an' sartain."

"In course he did," acquiesced Greene; "what else could yer expect?"

"What the h—l dew yer know about it, you damned ole fool?" roared the amiable Mr. Kent, rising from his chair.

This sudden fit of anger exploding on the devoted head of the worthy Greene, effectually silenced that gentleman. When Mr. Kent's wrath had somewhat cooled down, he took two or three turns around the room, and finally stopped in front of his worthy partner, and said, in commanding tones, "I want yer ter give me fifteen hundred dollars to redeem William from that are Yank."

"Let 'em go, damn 'im! he ain't worth seven hundred!" said Greene, in a surly tone.

"He ain't, ain't he? Well, I wouldn't take ten thousand fur 'im; he's ther best nigger I've ever owned," retorted Mr. Kent, with a savage shake of the head.

"What the devil were you allers whippin' 'im fur, then?" savagely demanded Greene.

"Cos he's mine," exclaimed his partner, with a savage wag of the head, "and I'd a right ter whip 'im, Mister Greene; that's why."

"So is my money mine, Mister Kent," retorted old man Greene, "an' I'll keep it in my pocket."

To this ungracious speech Mr. Kent replied that he might stick his money in a place unmentionable to ears polite, "cos he



didn't want none o' his favors." Having delivered himself of which pleasing piece of information, he left the room.

"D—n 'im, he thinks I belongs to 'im!" burst out the old man, striding up and down the length of the room in an excited manner. "Give 'im fifteen hundred dollars fur a seven-hundred dollar nigger! Not for Greene—a little too late in the season for that."

During this delectable interview with these two worthies, my eyes were anxiously watching for the appearance of him whom I was momentarily expecting; and when Kent demanded of Greene fifteen hundred dollars to redeem the boy with, my cogitations were not pleasant, to say the least; but I was determined he should have his freedom, if it cost every dollar that Kent had lost. The last named gentleman had been gone scarcely five minutes, when I was agreeably surprised to see him return in company with Forrest, and a single glance sufficed to tell me that they had come to some amicable understanding on the subject of the negro.

"Wait here a few minutes till I go up-stairs an' I'll git that fur ye," said Kent.

After an absence of a few moments he reappeared with a folded paper and laid it before Forrest, which the latter took, and then Kent asked him and myself to go down to the "Sans Souci" and have a julep with him, which we did, leaving the uninvited Mr. Greene pacing up and down the room, with his hands tightly clasped behind him.

While drinking our juleps, Kent inquired of Forrest when he intended leaving the city; the latter answering that he intended taking passage on the mail-boat, to-morrow, for New Orleans.

At parting he shook hands cordially with his companion, then left us standing together on the pavement in front of the "Sans Souci."

"What has he done?" I asked.

"Well, he couldn't redeem the nigger, but says if I'll keep him, he will, whenever he's got the money."

"That's very uncertain," I replied; "but has he given you the original bill of sale?" I asked.

"Yes," he replied; "that was it he handed me when we were up-stairs there."

"Well, that secures you the boy," I remarked, "at any rate."

But do you really leave on the mail-boat for New Orleans?" I asked.

"Yes," he answered, then inquired when I myself expected to leave?

"I don't know yet," I replied.

"Well, I s'pose I'll see you again before I leave here, at any rate?"

"Yes, I think so," I carelessly replied, and with these words we parted, each going his way.

William, according to appointment, came again to me at my room in the dusk of the evening, and I informed him that everything was now amicably arranged between Kent and Forrest with regard to himself, and that himself and his new master were going upon the morrow to set off for the North, and I also impressed it upon his mind, although it was, I believe, unnecessary, that he must see Forrest as soon as possible, and try and get him to come to a settlement. I told him to see him in his sleeping-chamber as soon as was practicable, and demand of him then and there a full settlement, and also to cause himself to be properly transferred into the possession of a certain person whom he had chosen for his master. But I cautioned William, in case Forrest would not comply with his request, not to mention me as the person to whom he desired to be sold, and to return as quickly as possible and let me know the result of the interview.

The laws of the State not permitting a negro to show himself in the streets after nine o'clock in the evening, unless in possession of a written permit from his master, I did not expect to see William again before the following morning, and such proved the case. He was at my door rapping me up as early as seven o'clock. He informed me in substance that Mr. Forrest had refused positively to accede to a single one of his demands. "He means bad, marster John! He tells me 'twont do fur me to hab munny, kase dey'll find it on me, an' makes me tell where I git 'em. When I tell 'im I wants ter stay here wid a gemmen I knows, he say dat ar won't do—dat I must come wid him to de Norf, an' he set me free when I gits dar, an' gib me my part of de money. Dat man mean bad, marster John, he mean bad all along." I was pretty well satisfied of it before, but now I was fully convinced. I had already made up my mind how I

intended to act in case I discovered that he was going to play the boy false. I learned from William that Forrest was at that moment in his sleeping-room, and a few minutes' brisk walk brought me to his domicile.\* I commanded William to remain below stairs until I should call for him. The door was opened responsive to my knock, and Forrest stood before me, early as it was, completely dressed. He bade me enter and be seated, with both of which requests I complied. "You're up early this morning, Morris," he remarked, giving me an unquiet look.

"Yes, sir," I rejoined, "and I'm sorry I am compelled to disturb you at such an hour."

"Don't mention it. What can I have the pleasure of doing for you?" he inquired, taking a chair within a few feet of me, and also sitting down upon it.

While on my way I had promised myself that I would not allow my temper to master me during my coming interview with Forrest, but to meet him in the same friendly manner as formerly, and in a pleasant way force him to do justice to the boy whom I believed he meant to use so cruelly. But we are generally creatures of circumstance, and it requires long training and much practice to be able to meet a person for whom you have conceived a sudden dislike, in the same friendly manner as formerly, especially when one is premeditating an attack upon him. The shrewd-witted Forrest in an instant divined that my presence in his room at this unwonted hour boded no good to himself. To his last demand I replied in a cold voice, "I'm not here, Mr. Forrest, to ask favors for myself, but to demand that you shall fulfill your contract with William! You know what that is! Give him an equal division of the money you got from Kent, and a transfer of himself, together with the two bills of sale, to whatever person he himself shall choose to answer that purpose. That's my business here, Mr. Forrest, and I'm very sorry to be obliged to force you to do so simple an act of justice to a poor slave, whom you eviden'tly believed tongue-tied by dread of the lash."

Several moments after I had concluded speaking, he sat without opening his lips, pale and speechless. The blood came and went rapidly in his cheeks, and he finally bounced to his feet and began to defend himself in the following incoherent strain.

"I thought last night that I was going to have trouble with that

d—n nigger! How could you have believed such a ridiculous lie from him, Morris? He's crazy struck after a wench here, and begged me for an hour last night to either sell him to some person here, or to buy the wench and take them both along with me, and when I refused he concocted this infernal lie to work upon your sympathies; and I don't know what other mischief he may have done me."

Still retaining my seat, I listened to this language with all due courtesy and attention, and when I had heard him to the end I replied coolly, "That play won't answer my purpose, Mr. Forrest. I'm here for business, and not disposed to stand any nonsense. If you push matters, you'll find my evidence will fasten upon you the charge of negro-stealing, and they hang persons very quick in this city for stealing a slave from his master. Let me once give Kent an inkling of this business, and the chances are that the lynchers will leave you in the piney woods, strung up to a tree, instead of your having fine times round the North, spending Kent's money. Now I want to know what you're going to do. And be quick about it, too."

Nothing at that period created more terror in the mind of the Northerner living in the South, than the thought of being in any way implicated in anything like a negro conspiracy, or entering into any collusion with them, or in any way assisting them to escape from their masters; and in no city in the whole South were such offenses punished more surely and speedily than in and around Mobile. Not only had the lynchers, during the winter, sent several individuals to their long homes with a short shrift and a long rope, for such offenses, but one had a few weeks since been hanged by order of the constituted authorities of the city of Mobile. These facts being well known to Forrest, my threats were by no means lost upon him, and he felt anything but comfortable under them. With bloodless cheek and quivering lip he deprecated my anger, and assured me that he had not the remotest idea of wronging the boy: that he had always intended taking him with him to the North, freeing him, and there handing over to him his lawful share of the spoils; and that only the fear of some difficulty with Kent, or the arrest of William with the money upon his person, had prevented him from fulfilling the original compact, when he was desired by the boy to do so.

"Had you told me, Morris," with a persuasive smile, "that you

knew about the matter, it would have been all right, for I was more scared of your 'dropping' on the game than I was of old Kent; and yesterday, when you talked to me in the manner you did about selling the boy in New Orleans, I couldn't make out what in the world you were driving at, and was afraid you suspected that something was wrong, and I was determined not to be caught in a trap, but to be on the safe side."

"Well," I asked, "are you willing to fulfill your contract now?"

"Of course I am! But I don't want you, nor the boy either, to think I ever had any intention of acting dishonorably in the matter."

But I did think so, and was firmly convinced in my own mind that such had been his intention. However, it was policy for me to make him think otherwise, so I merely said, "Excuse me, Mr. Forrest, if I have wronged you in this matter. I was induced by all the circumstances of the case to believe it was your fixed intention to rob the boy and sell him back into slavery, immediately upon reaching New Orleans. It was hard for me to believe you could be guilty of so dastardly an act, and I am glad to know that my suspicions were too hasty, and without foundation. I shall now," I added, "call in William, and we will arrange his business," rising from my chair to fetch the boy, who was waiting at the bottom of the stairs. Forrest gave him his money, and also a fictitious bill of sale of himself to me, for one thousand dollars, together with both of the other bills of sale, all of which he handed over to me for safe keeping. This business being finished, apparently to the satisfaction of all parties concerned, I ordered William to have all our baggage packed and ready for the next steamer to New Orleans, and to be at the boat himself half an hour before she started; after which Forrest and myself went to the restaurant and had our breakfast. I never let Forrest out of my sight until we were all together upon the New Orleans steamer; and without having bidden good-by to either Kent or Greene, I saw the steeples of Mobile fade into dim distance for the last time.

The next morning we arrived in New Orleans, and during the day I kept close to Forrest; I had detected him in committing a dirty action, and persons who will stoop to such things are usually as revengeful as a scorned woman. An anonymous letter

from him to the Chief of Police might at that period have easily caused the arrest of William and myself, on the charge that I was stealing the boy, and might have given us considerable trouble before we could have gotten released. I had no better reason than mere suspicion for believing him capable of so mean an action, but I thought best to be on the safe side. Without his knowledge, William and myself were that evening among the passengers of the "Diana," bound for Louisville.

On our arrival in Cincinnati I caused William to be put in possession of the requisite free papers, and also handed over his money to him; and at his request went to Paris, Kentucky, and purchased his mother for five hundred and fifty dollars, who was of course also immediately set free on her arrival in Cincinnati. Her son bought and furnished, for the use of both, a comfortable cottage, and showed himself, in after years, entirely worthy of the boon of freedom, by his sober and industrious habits, which won him the respect and good opinion of all who knew him.

As to Forrest, we never met again, nor did I desire that we should, for our meeting could not have been productive of any pleasure to either party. I have since sometimes regretted that I had not made known to him my part in the conspiracy to swindle Kent out of his boy and his money, for then he would have been saved the mortification of the charge which I brought against him, and which I have ever believed to have been strictly true.

At the time of making the compact with William, he no doubt meant to abide by the terms most religiously and faithfully. But the amount of money tempted his avarice. To him it was a small fortune, which he could retain without the smallest danger, since dread of the lash tied the tongue of the only person capable of testifying against him, and forbade the boy to denounce the villain who had wronged him. Then why should he surrender so valuable a prize to a nigger? 'Twas truly but casting pearls before swine! Besides, the boy was a great sight better off in slavery. Such were doubtless some of the nice arguments used by Forrest to quiet his conscience, and to reconcile it to the dastardly act which he was about to commit; always supposing him to have been encumbered with such a commodity. Thousands commit similar actions daily; not because the majority of mankind are inherently vicious; but because they are vanquished by

some powerful temptation. On the contrary, but a very small minority are utterly depraved; but the best-balanced minds are at times tempted to diverge from the paths of honor, and such will not cease to be the case, so long as gain continues to be the chief pursuit of mankind. Schiller tells us that there have been in his life periods when he was capable of committing any crime. In that respect he was not one whit worse than the majority of mankind, and among these may be ranked myriads who preach morality, and assume the saintly garb of virtue.

Slavery became so demoralizing to the South, that negroes came to be considered beyond the pale of justice. Even those bearing upon their person free papers had no rights which were respected by the whites, unless protected by powerful patrons. Hundreds of the free negroes coming into the southern ports were kidnapped and sold into bondage. In New Orleans, more especially, was this business carried on to a fearful extent. Servants were decoyed from ships and steamers, robbed of their free papers, when they would be conveyed to some of the plantations along the coast, and there forced to work under the lash.

About fifty of these unfortunates were worked on a sugar plantation up the river, owned by an American named Poindexter, about sixty miles from New Orleans. In this fellow the crimps of that city found a ready purchaser for their stolen chattels.

These outrages were well known to the authorities of New Orleans; they were public talk upon the streets, and within the knowledge of law-makers, magistrates, and members of the gospel; yet were never denounced upon the forum, in the pulpit, or by the public press of the city. Not a single voice was raised in favor of restoring these outraged human beings to their rightful liberty. All sense of justice to them was smothered.

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WILL SHORTLY APPEAR,

A SEQUEL TO

"WANDERINGS OF A VAGABOND."

*Cholmon*



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